POEMS OF THE WAR AND THE PEACE

STERLING A LEONARD

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Poems of the war and the peace

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POEMS OF THE WAR AND THE PEACE

COLLECTED, WITH A FOREWORD AND NOTES, BY

STERLING ANDRUS LEONARD

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

NEW YORK

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1921

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FOREWORD

THE reality of a great struggle is always most truly and adequately presented in the genuine poetry that grows out of it. The plangent debates of apologists for either side will be analyzed by careful historians, and filed, with dates and statistics, to lie for the most part unregarded. The experiences and ideas of most men who themselves suffered the horror and anguish of war are passed on to succeeding generations as small ripples of tradition, increasingly dim and distorted. But some, with genius of perception and expression, looking upon the cataclysm from various points of view, seize upon what seem to them its essential aspects and ideas and give them memorable expression. It is these poets who have great and lasting power, for they make their experience permanently vital and of ultimate value. For the young people of today, who will control the war and peace of tomorrow, has been made this anthology of poems which picture the Great War and the spirit and ideals that animated it.

It has been noted how free was the poetry of the war, and particularly that of the soldier poets, from hysterical hatred and bitterness of execration. To those who endured its bitterest agony, this struggle was different from others for glory and for conquest in the past. These poems, too, are "strangely free from the mood of

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the older war minstrels.[1] Our poets of today are seldom tempted by the pomp and circumstance of armies. They indulge in very little glorification of the sheer joy of combat, the hot hatreds and bloody vengeance of battle. The war is seen by them rather as a new atonement than as a mighty drama of arms; and its heroes for them are the men, the women, the children, who have suffered to the uttermost for the redemption of the world. The overwhelming grief; the superhuman endurance; the poignant and triumphant dignity of death; the terrible losses; the spiritual reparation—these are the themes that our war poets have made peculiarly their own. It is as if they were constrained by that warning uttered out of the fulness of the wisdom of peace—

> The tumult and the shouting dies;
> The captains and the kings depart:
> Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
> An humble and a contrite heart.

"But for all the tragedy and pathos, there is no weak lament, no vain longing for the peace that is gone. Never in history have war poets been so preoccupied with the greatness of their cause. The beauty of the ideal toward which humanity today is struggling through blood, touches and consecrates their art."

For, more than ever in the past, earnest men saw in this war the awful, mad futility of the whole world's suffering. They envisaged clearly the blind greed and narrow pride which bring wars about. They were highly

[1] This quotation and the following paragraph are from the Foreword to *War Poems from the Yale Review,* New Haven, 1918.

resolved that this pestilence should not again ravage and slaughter. The mood of such powerful soldier poems as *The Other Side* and *Aftermath* is constant and typical. And they bring out only too often, in startling relief, a contrast more recently realized between what these common men felt, what women also believed who sacrificed with high devotion, what idealists and dreamers saw and acclaimed—and what the makers of war in every country planned and brought about.

For in the years which have passed since the armistice, a sense of disillusion, a deepening despair have grown dominant in many men's thought—a doubt expressed in certain of the poems on the victory and the peace. The issue clearly remains unsettled still; the ideal of permanent peace, of great Peace based on justice, appears increasingly doubtful of achievement. And because of this gulf between what men fought for and what their rulers ordained, attention to the poetry which presents the experiences and the ideals of men in war seems of pressing significance. It is necessary for us, and for our young people most of all, to see war as those realized it who suffered it nearest and sharpest. They must know it, not as a glorious and jolly adventure, but as the sternest and most terrible reality in human history. They must realize that its undoubted evocation of sublime courage, as well as of looseness, bestiality, and hysterical madness, are of a piece with the like revelations of human nature made by any catastrophe or pestilence. They must come to see, both why men were willing to endure its "hell of murderous servitude" — "t to "secure a world worth living in—*for you*"—

and why their agony has been made to pay instead for fruits of hideous evil. A keen observer has pictured recently " the slimy progeny of cruelty, . . . of egoism, of violence, of materiality " [2] which has, as always before, succeeded this conflict. War after war flaming up in Europe and Asia demonstrates the peoples' sense of injustice in the peace decreed. Only in the light of full understanding of these things can we now, and in after times, rightly assess the guilt for the conduct of the war as well as for its origin, and for the negotiations since the war has ceased. Only through this realization can the aftermath of this unimaginable horror be a genuine gain in human understanding and in control over the mad forces that have periodically ridden down our slight barriers of civilization.

The poems have grouped themselves naturally into four divisions. First are those expressing love of country—not bombast and rodomontade, but serious expressions of intensity of conviction. Scarcely can we find anywhere more various and beautiful embodiments of this stirring and mighty power, which moved in countless armies the Five Souls of Mr. Ewer's poem to brave deeds and lowly, terrible deaths—seventeen million deaths.

The war is next pictured in various aspects, sincerely, as it was felt and observed. The hysterical anger, the military swank, and the " eyewash stuff " of its early days in each country were quickly passed by and

[2] Sisley Huddleton: " The Menace of the World," *Atlantic*, May, 1920.

forgotten. Instead there stand out, in these more enduring verses, pictures of men who faced death with dauntless courage and whimsical humor, and viewed largely the forces in conflict. Here, too, we see the common soldiers who, without personal hope or illusions, endured the foulness and the agony. The poems of this section are given an epic touch by A. E.'s picture of the pagan gods of war snuffing satisfied at the carnage.

The supreme sacrifice is recorded in the most poignant and glorious poems of the war. The quiet flame of courage and consecration, the bitterness of women's agony quenched by stern resolution, make up an incomparable picture of the human spirit raising itself above this devastation and torment. The conception of "A New Heaven," the fit tabernacle for so godlike a spirit, concludes this division.

Finally, the ideal of those who endured the brunt of the war and carried it through—the ideal of a peace lasting because just—is presented in various forms: We must have a greater view of God than our small, vengeful tribal deities afford; we must have clean hands, and "loftier, nobler aims"; we must achieve a "great reunion with our foe"; above all, we must "create great Peace." This is the recurrent theme of the poets who have tried to express the highest ideals that grew up in the years of horror. But "woe to the nation that looks for peace in quietness," the quietness that allows millions to starve—"starved hearts, starved freedoms"—below the level of adequate and decent life. Such peace kills men just as cruelly and surely as does war, by preventable diseases and accidents and the slow decay of

poverty. It uses them up for causes no more worthy, and without noble illusion of sacrifice for country or for freedom. For numbers of men the hell of war, that "blackens the early violets with the blood of the young," is almost a relief from the dull miseries of such peace. Only as we create

> The Peace that demands all of a man,
> His love, his life, his veriest self;
> Kindle him to vision, invite him to joy and adventure:
> Set him to work, not to create *things*
> But to create men . . .
> Yea, himself—

only so can we make sure that these dead shall not have died in vain.[3]

Only in view of these ideals is the meaning of the love of country, of the various fineness and nobility and the unequaled courage of sacrifice of the human spirit, to be read aright. Only for this was its suffering meaningful. In the deep rejoicing at the coming of peace—

> Everyone suddenly burst out singing; . . .
> And beauty came like the setting sun:
> My heart was shaken with tears; and horror
> Drifted away . . . O, but everyone
> Was a bird; and the song was wordless, the singing will never be done.[4]

But this mood passed gradually away, in a growing fear that we may have won victory—without peace.

[3] The last few quotations in this paragraph are from James Oppenheim's "1914—and After" (*War and Laughter,* Century, 1916).

[4] From "Everyone Sang," in Siegfried Sassoon's *Picture Show* (Dutton, 1920).

The poems of the war and the peace end on a note of question—a question that has troubled thinking men since the armistice. Has the high ideal been anywise met, or the seeds of true peace been sown? Or have we only scattered the dragon's teeth anew? To the earnest and thoughtful consideration of that question this anthology is dedicated.

The editor regrets that it was impossible to get leave for reprinting Mr. Masefield's *August, 1914;* it is most unfortunate that this great poem has been withheld from the anthologies, and hence is less widely known than it should be. Only one or two other verses have had to be left out because of like difficulties. But in a collection like this one, intended for a definite audience, it has seemed necessary also to omit several poems, in themselves of high excellence and beauty, which high-school students could not be expected to apprehend or to appreciate.

Cape Rozier, Maine,
September, 1920.

I

LOVE OF COUNTRY

'Tis all that we think but cannot say,
Even in song, though that is the nearest way.
Emile Cammaerts.

POEMS OF THE WAR AND THE PEACE

"THE AVENUE OF THE ALLIES"

THIS is the song of the wind as it came
Tossing the flags of the nations to flame:
I am the breath of God. I am His laughter.
I am His Liberty. That is my name.

So it descended, at night, on the city.
So it went lavishing beauty and pity,
Lighting the lordliest street of the world
With half of the banners that earth has unfurled;
Over the lamps that are brighter than stars,
Laughing aloud on its way to the wars,
Proud as America sweeping along
Death and destruction like notes in a song,
Leaping to battle as man to his mate,
Joyous as God when He moved to create,—
Never was voice of a nation so glorious,
Glad of its cause and afire with its fate!
Never did eagle on mightier pinion
Tower to the height of a brighter dominion,
Kindling the hope of the prophets to flame,
Calling aloud on the deep as it came,

Cleave me a way for an army with banners.
I am His Liberty. That is my name.

Know you the meaning of all they are doing?
Know you the light that their soul is pursuing?
Know you the might of the world they are making,
This nation of nations whose heart is awaking?
What is this mingling of peoples and races?
Look at the wonder and joy in their faces!
Look how the folds of the union are spreading!
Look, for the nations are come to their wedding.
How shall the folk of our tongue be afraid of it?
England was born of it, England was made of it,
Made of this welding of tribes into one,
This marriage of pilgrims that followed the sun!
Britain and Roman and Saxon were drawn
By winds of this Pentecost, out of the dawn,
Westward, to make her one people of many;
But here is a union more mighty than any.
Know you the soul of this deep exultation?
Know you the word that goes forth to this nation?
I am the breath of God. I am His Liberty.
Let there be light over all His creation.

Over this continent wholly united,
They that were foemen in Europe are plighted.
Here, in a league that our blindness and pride
Doubted and flouted and mocked and denied,
Dawns the Republic, the laughing, gigantic
Europe, united, beyond the Atlantic.
That is America, speaking one tongue,
Acting her epics before they are sung,

Driving her rails from the palms to the snow,
Through States that are greater than emperors know,
Forty-eight States that are empires in might,
But ruled by the will of one people tonight,
Nerved as one body with net-works of steel,
Merging their strength in the one Commonweal,
Brooking no poverty, mocking at Mars,
Building their cities to talk with the stars,
Thriving, increasing by myriads again
Till even in numbers old Europe may wane.
How shall a son of the England they fought
Fail to declare the full pride of his thought,
Stand with the scoffers who, year after year,
Bring the Republic their half-hidden sneer?
Now, as in beauty she stands at our side,
Who shall withhold the full gift of his pride?
Not the great England who knows that her son,
Washington, fought her, and Liberty won;
England, whose names like the stars in their station
Stand at the foot of that world's Declaration.
Washington, Livingston, Langdon, she claims them,
It is her right to be proud when she names them,
Proud of that voice in the night as it came,
Tossing the flags of the nations to flame:
I am the breath of God. I am His laughter.
I am His Liberty. That is my name.

Flags in themselves are but rags that are dyed.
Flags, in that wind, are like nations enskied.
See how they grapple the night as it rolls
And trample it under like triumphing souls.

Over the city that never knew sleep,
Look at the riotous folds as they leap.
Thousands of tri-colors, laughing for France,
Ripple and whisper and thunder and dance;
Thousands of flags for Great Britain aflame
Answer their sisters in Liberty's name.
Belgium is burning in pride overhead.
Poland is near, and her sunrise is red.
Under and over and fluttering between,
Italy burgeons in red, white, and green.
See, how they climb, like adventurous flowers,
Over the tops of the terrible towers. . . .
There in the darkness, the glories are mated.
There in the darkness, a world is created.
There, in this Pentecost, streaming on high.
There with a glory of stars in the sky.
There the broad flag of our union and liberty
Rides the proud night-wind and tyrannies die.

Alfred Noyes

THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

Rupert Brooke

A CHANT OF LOVE FOR ENGLAND [1]

A SONG of hate is a song of Hell;
Some there be that sing it well.
Let them sing it loud and long,
We lift our hearts in a loftier song:
We lift our hearts to Heaven above,
Singing the glory of her we love,—
England!

Glory of thought and glory of deed,
Glory of Hampden and Runnymede;
Glory of ships that sought far goals,
Glory of swords and glory of souls!
Glory of songs mounting as birds,
Glory immortal of magical words;
Glory of Milton, glory of Nelson,
Tragical glory of Gordon and Scott;
Glory of Shelley, glory of Sidney,
Glory transcendent that perishes not,—
Hers is the story, hers be the glory,
England!

[1] Taken by permission from *A Chant of Love for England, and Other Poems,* by Helen Gray Cone. E. P. Dutton and Company, New York, publishers.

Shatter her beauteous breast ye may;
The spirit of England none can slay!
Dash the bomb on the dome of Paul's—
Deem ye the fame of the Admiral falls?
Pry the stone from the chancel floor—
Dream ye that Shakespeare shall live no more?
Where is the giant shot that kills
Wordsworth walking the old green hills?
Trample the red rose on the ground—
Keats is Beauty while earth spins round!
Bind her, grind her, burn her with fire,
Cast her ashes into the sea,—
She shall escape, she shall aspire,
She shall arise to make men free:
She shall arise in a sacred scorn,
Lighting the lives that are yet unborn;
Spirit supernal, Splendour eternal,
ENGLAND!

Helen Gray Cone

BELGIUM THE BAR-LASS

THE night was still. The King sat with the Queen.
She sang. Her maidens spun. A peaceful scene.

Sudden, wild echoes shake the castle wall.
Their foes come crashing through the outer hall.

They rush like thunder down the gallery floor . . .
. . . Someone has stolen the bolt that bars the door!

No pin to hold the loops, no stick, no stave,
Nothing! An open door, an open grave!

Then Catherine Bar-lass thrust her naked arm
(A girl's arm, white as milk, alive and warm)

Right through the loops from which the bolt was gone:
" 'Twill hold (she said) until they break the bone—

My King, you have one instant to prepare! "
She said no more, because the thrust was there.

. . . . . .

A. Mary F. Robinson
(*Madame Duclaux*)

BELGIUM

La Belgique ne regrette rien.

Not with her ruined silver spires,
Not with her cities shamed and rent,
Perish the imperishable fires
That shape the homestead from the tent.

Wherever men are staunch and free,
There shall she keep her fearless state,
And, homeless, to great nations be
The home of all that makes them great.

Edith Wharton

SERBIA TO THE HOHENZOLLERNS

(*August, 1915*)

I AM she whose ramparts, ringed with Christian swords,
Bore the first huge batterings of the Paynim hordes.
Ground beneath their horse-hoofs, broken by their blows,
I was made a pavement for the feet of foes:
Mighty lords from Asia, proud above their peers,
Rode over my body for three hundred years:
Buried under armies, hopeless did I lie,
Hanging on to honor, sick for liberty;
Cried to Christ for justice, grasped a broken rood,
Saw each hope that flickered, stifled, drowned in blood;
Saw through torturing ages, dreadfully arrayed,
Antichrist, all armored, riding in Belgrade!

So the iron bit my soul; and that soul became
Iron, fit for warriors' use, tempered in the flame
By my sweat and anguish; out of my despair,
Step by step I won it back, the name that now I bear.
Upstarts! Can you teach me any wrong or woe,
Tyranny or torture that I do not know?
Bid your heathen armies glut all hell with crimes!
Loose your hounds of carnage! 'Twill be like old times.
Though your hand be heavy, though your head be high,
Othman's head was higher in the days gone by!
I, that died and am alive, call on God that He,
Who shall judge the quick and dead, judge 'twixt you and me!

Cecil Chesterton

ON THE ITALIAN FRONT, MCMXVI

"I WILL die cheering, if I needs must die;
So shall my last breath write upon my lips
Viva Italia! when my spirit slips
Down the great darkness from the mountain sky;
And those who shall behold me where I lie
Shall murmur: 'Look, you! how his spirit dips
From glory into glory! the eclipse
Of death is vanquished! Lo, his victor-cry!'

"Live, thou, upon my lips, Italia mine,
The sacred death-cry of my frozen clay!
Let thy dear light from my dead body shine
And to the passer-by thy message say:
'*Ecco!* though heaven has made my skies divine,
My sons' love sanctifies my soil for aye!'"

George Edward Woodberry

RED-ROBED FRANCE

THE Huns stripped off my own green gown
And left me stark and bare;
My sons, they spread a red robe down
And wrapped me in it there.

The garb they brought was red as blood—
The robe was red as flame;
They wrapped me in it where I stood
And took away my shame.

Was ever web so costly wove
  Or warp so glorious spun?
I'll wear no vestment prized above
  That wide and scarlet one.

Though younger sons, some happier day,
  Weave me a fair green gown
Anew, or bid me don array
  Of corn-ripe gold and brown,

The names—like beads, told one by one—
  My heart will still repeat;
Will call, with tears, each dear, dear son,
  Whose red robe wrapped my feet.

Charles Buxton Going

VIVE LA FRANCE!

FRANCELINE rose in the dawning gray,
And her heart would dance, though she knelt to pray,
For her man Michel had holiday,
  Fighting for France.

She offered her prayer by the cradle-side,
And with baby palms folded in hers she cried:
"If I have but one prayer, dear, crucified
  Christ—save France!

"But if I have two, then, by Mary's grace,
Carry me safe to the meeting-place,
Let me look once again on my dear love's face,
  Save him for France!"

She crooned to her boy: "Oh, how glad he'll be,
Little three-months-old, to set eyes on thee!
For, 'Rather than gold, would I give,' wrote he,
'A son to France.'

"Come, now, be good, little stray *sauterelle*,
For we're going by-by to thy papa Michel,
But I'll not say where for fear thou wilt tell,
Little pigeon of France!

"Six days' leave and a year between!
But what would you have? In six days clean,
Heaven was made," said Franceline,
"Heaven and France."

She came to the town of the nameless name,
To the marching troops in the street she came,
And she held high her boy like a taper flame
Burning for France.

Fresh from the trenches and gray with grime,
Silent they march like a pantomime;
"But what need of music? My heart beats time—
Vive la France!"

His regiment comes. Oh, then where is he?
"There is dust in my eyes, for I cannot see—
Is that my Michel to the right of thee,
Soldier of France?"

Then out of the ranks a comrade fell—
"Yesterday—'t was a splinter of shell—
And he whispered thy name, did thy poor Michel,
Dying for France."

The tread of the troops on the pavement throbbed
Like a woman's heart of its last joy robbed,
As she lifted her boy to the flag, and sobbed:
"Vive la France!"

Charlotte Holmes Crawford

THE SOUL OF JEANNE D'ARC

She came not into the Presence as a martyred saint might come,
Crowned, white-robed and adoring, with very reverence dumb—
She stood as a straight young soldier, confident, gallant, strong,
Who asks a boon of his captain in the sudden hush of the drum.

She said: "Now have I stayed too long in this my place of bliss,
With these glad dead that, comforted, forget what sorrow is
Upon that world whose stony stairs they climbed to come to this.

"But lo, a cry hath torn the peace wherein so long I stayed,
Like a trumpet's call at Heaven's wall from a herald unafraid—
A million voices in one cry, '*Where is the Maid, the Maid?*'

"I had forgot from too much joy that olden task of mine,
But I have heard a certain word shatter the chant divine,
Have watched a banner glow and grow before mine eyes for sign.

"I would return to that my land flung in the teeth of war,
I would cast down my robe and crown that pleasure me no more,
And don the armor that I knew, the valiant sword I bore.

"And angels militant shall fling the gates of Heaven wide,
And souls new-dead whose lives were shed like leaves on war's red tide
Shall cross their swords above our heads and cheer us as we ride.

"For with me goes that soldier saint, Saint Michael of the sword,
And I shall ride on his right side, a page beside his lord,
And men shall follow like swift blades to reap a sure reward.

"Grant that I answer this my call, yea, though the end may be
The naked shame, the biting flame, the last, long agony;
I would go singing down that road where fagots wait for me.

"Mine be the fire about my feet, the smoke above my head;
So might I glow, a torch to show the path my heroes tread;
My Captain! Oh, my Captain, let me go back!" she said.

Theodosia Garrison

AMERICA AT WAR

America,
If thy sons can go to war
Thinking—
If men democracy-trained can fight
And not glory in it
But earnestly regret that war must be—
If they can follow thy banner
And know
That its red does not represent blood
But sunrise,
That its white
Is not death but deliverance,
That its stars
Are not pilots for warships
But makers of poetry—
O America,
Then shall democracy conquer
And war shall never more be.

Gertrude Smith

MY LAND

Not for long can I be angry with the most beautiful—
I look out of my vengefulness, and see her so young, so vastly young,
Wandering her fields beside Huron,
Or peering over Mt. Ranier.

Is she in daisies up to her knees?
Do I see that fresh white smile of hers in the morning-shadowed city?
Is she clinging to the headlight of the locomotive that roars between the pine-lone mountains?
Are her ankles in the wash of sea-weed beside the sea-battered rocks?

Ah! never the curve of a hill but she has just gone beyond it,
And the prairies are as sweet with her as with clover and sage. . . .
Her young breasts are soft against willow-leaves,
Her hands are quicker than birds in the vagueness of the forest.

Whether it is a dream that I have honey-gathered from the years of my days,
Whether it is so, and no dream,
I cannot help the love that goes out of me to these plains and hills,
These coasts, these cities, and these seas.

James Oppenheim

FIVE SOULS

FIRST SOUL

I was a peasant of the Polish plain;
I left my plough because the message ran:
Russia, in danger, needed every man
To save her from the Teuton; and was slain.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.

SECOND SOUL

I was a Tyrolese, a mountaineer;
I gladly left my mountain home to fight
Against the brutal, treacherous Muscovite;
And died in Poland on a Cossack spear.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.

THIRD SOUL

I worked at Lyons at my weaver's loom,
When suddenly the Prussian despot hurled
His felon blow at France and at the world;
Then went I forth to Belgium and my doom.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.

FOURTH SOUL

I owned a vineyard by the wooded Main,
Until the Fatherland, begirt by foes
Lusting her downfall, called me, and I rose

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Swift to the call, and died in fair Lorraine.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.

FIFTH SOUL

I worked in a great shipyard by the Clyde.
There came a sudden word of wars declared,
Of Belgium, peaceful, helpless, unprepared,
Asking our aid: I joined the ranks, and died.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.

W. N. Ewer

II

PICTURES OF THE WAR

Not for themselves, O daughters, grandsons, sons,
Your tortured forebears wrought this miracle;
Not for themselves accomplished utterly
This loathliest task of murderous servitude;
But just because they realized that thus,
And only thus, by sacrifice, might they
Secure a world worth living in—*for you.*

Gilbert Frankau

THE SIXTY MILLION

Men who march away.

"Yes; quaint and curious war is!
You shoot a fellow down
You'd treat, if met where any bar is,
Or help to half-a-crown."

Thomas Hardy

THE CONNAUGHT RANGERS

I saw the Connaught Rangers when they were passing by,
On a spring day, a good day, with gold rifts in the sky.
Themselves were marching steadily along the Liffey quay
An' I see the young proud look of them as if it was to-day!
The bright lads, the right lads, I have them in my mind,
With the green flags on their bayonets all fluttering in the wind!

A last look at old Ireland, a last good-bye maybe,
Then the gray sea, the wide sea, my grief upon the sea!
And when will they come home, says I, when will they see once more
The dear blue hills of Wicklow and Wexford's dim gray shore?
The brave lads of Ireland, no better lads you'll find,
With the green flags on their bayonets all fluttering in the wind!

Three years have passed since that spring day, sad years for them and me.
Green graves there are in Serbia and in Gallipoli.
And many who went by that day along the muddy street
Will never hear the roadway ring to their triumphant feet.

But when they march before Him, God's welcome will be kind,
And the green flags on their bayonets will flutter in the wind.

Winifred M. Letts

THE SPIRES OF OXFORD

I saw the spires of Oxford
As I was passing by,
The gray spires of Oxford
Against a pearl-gray sky.
My heart was with the Oxford men
Who went abroad to die.

The years go fast in Oxford,
The golden years and gay,
The hoary Colleges look down
On careless boys at play.
But when the bugles sounded war
They put their games away.

They left the peaceful river,
The cricket-field, the quad,
The shaven lawns of Oxford,
To seek a bloody sod—
They gave their merry youth away
For country and for God.

God rest you, happy gentlemen,
Who laid your good lives down,
Who took the khaki and the gun

Instead of cap and gown!
God bring you to a fairer place
Than even Oxford town!

Winifred M. Letts

EAGLE YOUTH

(*1918*)

They have taken his horse and plume,
They have left him to plod, and fume
For a hero's scope and room!
They have curbed his fighting pride,
They have bade him burrow and hide
With a million, side by side:
Look—into the air he springs,
Fighting with wings!

He has found a way to be free
Of that dun immensity
That would swallow up such as he:
Who would burrow when he could fly?
He will climb up into the sky
And the world shall watch him die!
Only his peers may dare
Follow him there!

Karle Wilson Baker

HOME THOUGHTS FROM LAVENTIE

GREEN gardens in Laventie!
Soldiers only know the street
Where the mud is churned and splashed about
By battle-wending feet;
And yet beside one stricken house there is a glimpse of grass—
Look for it when you pass.

Beyond the church whose pitted spire
Seems balanced on a strand
Of swaying stone and tottering brick,
Two roofless ruins stand;
And here, among the wreckage, where the back-wall should have been,
We found a garden green.

The grass was never trodden on,
The little path of gravel
Was overgrown with celandine;
No other folk did travel
Along its weedy surface but the nimble-footed mouse,
Running from house to house.

So all along the tender blades
Of soft and vivid grass
We lay, nor heard the limber wheels
That pass and ever pass
In noisy continuity until their stony rattle
Seems in itself a battle.

At length we rose up from this ease
Of tranquil happy mind,
And searched the garden's little length
Some new pleasaunce to find;
And there some yellow daffodils, and jasmine hanging high,
Did rest the tired eye.

The fairest and most fragrant
Of the many sweets we found
Was a little bush of Daphne flower
Upon a mossy mound,
And so thick were the blossoms set and so divine the scent,
That we were well content.

Hungry for Spring I bent my head,
The perfume fanned my face,
And all my soul was dancing
In that lovely little place,
Dancing with a measured step from wrecked and shattered towns
Away . . . upon the Downs.

I saw green banks of daffodil,
Slim poplars in the breeze,
Great tan-brown hares in gusty March
A-courting on the leas.
And meadows, with their glittering streams—and silver-scurrying dace—
Home, what a perfect place!

E. Wyndham Tennant

ST. OUEN IN PICARDY

GLEAMS of English orchards dance
Through the sunny fields of France;
Flowers that blow at Nedonchel
Thrive in Gloucestershire as well;
Children sing to fleet the time
What they deem an English rhyme—
"Kiss me quick; aprés la guerre
Promenade en Angleterre."

English hearts are gladdened when
Out of childhood's lips again
Comes the lilt of English song
When their absence has been long;
Children running through the street
Beating time with merry feet—
"Kiss me quick; aprés la guerre
Promenade en Angleterre."

But to hear them as they sing
Brings a sudden questioning;
Here the children play and roam—
How's my little one at home?
In St. Ouen the simple strain
Takes the heart with hungry pain—
"Kiss me quick; aprés la guerre
Promenade en Angleterre."

Anonymous

[1] Reprinted by permission from London *Punch*.

THE PLACE

Blossoms as old as May I scatter here,
And a blue wave I lifted from the stream.
It shall not know when winter days are drear
Or March is hoarse with blowing. But a-dream
The laurel boughs shall hold a canopy
Peacefully over it the winter long,
Till all the birds are back from oversea,
And April rainbows win a blackbird's song.

And when the war is over I shall take
My lute a-down to it and sing again
Songs of the whispering things amongst the brake,
And those I love shall know them by their strain.
Their airs shall be the blackbird's twilight song,
Their words shall be all flowers with fresh dews hoar.—
But it is lonely now in winter long,
And, God! to hear the blackbird sing once more.

Francis Ledwidge

THE SOLDIER'S WHIMSICAL HUMOR

"Leur gaieté fait peur."
W. J. Locke

THE QUESTION

I WONDER if the old cow died or not.
Gey bad she was the night I left, and sick.
Dick reckoned she would mend. He knows a lot—
At least he fancies so himself, does Dick.

Dick knows a lot. But maybe I did wrong
To leave the cow to him, and come away.
Over and over like a silly song
These words keep bumming in my head all day.

And all I think of, as I face the foe
And take my lucky chance of being shot,
Is this—that if I'm hit, I'll never know
Till Doomsday if the old cow died or not.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

HIS FATHER

I QUITE forgot to put the spigot in.
It's just come over me. . . . And it is queer
To think he'll not care if we lose or win
And yet be jumping-mad about that beer.

I left it running full. He must have said
A thing or two. I'd give my stripes to hear
What he will say if I'm reported dead
Before he gets me told about that beer!

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

THE TWA WEELUMS

I'm Sairgint Weelum Henderson frae Pairth,
That's wha I am!
There's just ae regimint in a' the airth
That's worth a damn;
An' gin the bonniest fechter o' the lot
Ye seek to see,
Him that's the best—*whaur ilka man's a Scot*—
Speir you at me!

Gin there's a hash o' Gairmans pitten oot
By aichts an' tens,
That Wully Henderson's been thereaboot
A'body kens;
Fegs-aye! Yon Weelum that's in Gairmanie,
He hadna' reckoned
Wi' Sairgint Weelum Henderson an' wi'
The Forty-Second!

Yon day we lichtit on the shores o' France,
The lassies standin'
Trod ilk on ither's taes to get the chance
To see us landin'.
The besoms! O they smiled to me—an' yet
They couldna' help it.
(Mysel', I just was thinkin' foo we'd get
They Gairmans skelpit.)

I'm wearied wi' them, for it's aye the same
Whaure'er we gang,
Our Captain thinks we've got his een to blame,
But man! he's wrang!
I winna say he's no as smairt a lad
As ye micht see
Atween twa Sawbiths—aye, he's no sae bad,
But he's no me!

Weel, let the limmers bide; their bonnie lips
Are fine an' reid,
But me an' Weelum's got to get to grips
Afore we're deid,
An' gin he thinks he hasna' met his match
He'll sune be wiser—
Here's to mysel'! Here's to the auld Black Watch!
An' damn the Kaiser!

Violet Jacob

"FORM FOURS"

A Volunteer's Nightmare

If you're Volunteer Artist or Athlete, or if you defend
the Home,
You sacrifice "Ease" for "Attention," and march like
a metronome;
But of all elementary movements you learn in your
Volunteer Corps
The one that is really perplexing is known as the Form-
ing of Fours.

Imagine us numbered off from the right: the Sergeant faces the squad,
And says that the odd files do not move—I never seem to be odd!
And then his instructions run like this (very simple in black and white)—
"A pace to the rear with the left foot, and one to the right with the right."

Of course, if you don't think deeply, you do it without a hitch;
You have only to know your right and left, and remember which is which;
But as soon as you try to be careful, you get in the deuce of a plight,
With "a pace to the right with the left foot, and one to the rear with the right!"

Besides, when you're thoroughly muddled the Sergeant doubles your doubt
By saying that rules reverse themselves, as soon as you're "turned about";
So round you go on your right heel, and practice until you are deft
At "a pace to the front with the right foot, and one to the left with the left."

In my dreams the Sergeant, the Kaiser, and Kipling mix my feet,
Saying "East is Left, and Right is Might, and never the twain shall meet!"

In my nightmare squad *all* files are odd, and their Fours
are horribly queer,
With "a pace to the left with the front foot, and one
to the right with the rear!"

Frank Sidgwick

THE TOY BAND

(*A Song of the Great Retreat*)

DREARY lay the long road, dreary lay the town,
Lights out and never a glint o' moon:
Weary lay the stragglers, half a thousand down,
Sad sighed the weary big Dragoon.
"Oh! if I'd a drum here to make them take the road
again,
Oh! if I'd a fife to wheedle, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load
again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

"Hey, but here's a toy shop; here's a drum for me,
Penny whistles too to play the tune!
Half a thousand dead men soon shall hear and see
We're a band!" said the weary big Dragoon.
"Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load
again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!"

Cheerly goes the dark road, cheerly goes the night,
Cheerly goes the blood to keep the beat:
Half a thousand dead men marching on to fight
With a little penny drum to lift their feet.
Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

As long as there's an Englishman to ask a tale of me,
As long as I can tell the tale aright,
We'll not forget the penny whistle's wheedle-deedle-dee
And the big Dragoon a-beating down the night,
Rubadub! Rubadub! Wake and take the road again,
Wheedle-deedle-deedle-dee, Come, boys, come!
You that mean to fight it out, wake and take your load again,
Fall in! Fall in! Follow the fife and drum!

Henry Newbolt

BRITISH MERCHANT SERVICE, 1915

Oh, down by Millwall Basin as I went the other day,
I met a skipper that I knew, and to him I did say:
"Now what's the cargo, Captain, that brings you up this way?"

"Oh, I've been up and down (said he) and round about also . . .
From Sydney to the Skagerack, and Kiel to Callao . . .
With a leaking steam-pipe all the way to Californ-i-o . . .

" With pots and pans and ivory fans and every kind of thing,
Rails and nails and cotton bales, and sewer pipes and string . . .
But now I'm through with cargoes, and I'm here to serve the King!

" And if it's sweeping mines (to which my fancy somewhat leans)
Or hanging out with booby-traps for the skulking submarines,
I'm here to do my blooming best and give the beggars beans!

" A rough job and a tough job is the best job for me,
And what or where I don't much care, I'll take what it may be,
For a tight place is the right place when it's foul weather at sea! "

. . . . . .

There's not a port he does n't know from Melbourne to New York;
He's as hard as a lump of harness beef, and as salt as pickled pork . . .
And he'll stand by a wreck in a murdering gale and count it part of his work!

He's the terror of the fo'c's'le when he heals its various ills
With turpentine and mustard leaves, and poultices and pills . . .
But he knows the sea like the palm of his hand, as a shepherd knows the hills.

He'll spin you yarns from dawn to dark—and half of 'em are true!
He swears in a score of languages, and maybe talks in two!
And . . . he'll lower a boat in a hurricane to save a drowning crew.

A rough job or a tough job—he's handled two or three—
And what or where he won't much care, nor ask what the risk may be . . .
For a tight place is the right place when it's wild weather at sea!

Cicely Fox Smith

A FINGER AND A HUGE, THICK THUMB

(*A Ballad of the Trenches*)

It was nearly twelve o'clock by the sergeant's watch;
The moon was three hours high.
The long grass growing on the parapet
Rustled as the wind went by.
Hoar-frost glistened on the bayonets
Of the rifles in the rifle-rack.
Suddenly I heard a faint, weird call
And an answering call come back.

We were standing in the corner by the Maxim gun,
In the shadow, and the sergeant said,
As he gripped my arm: "Did you hear it?"
I could only nod my head.

Looking down the length of the moonlit trench,
I saw the sleeping men
Huddled on the floor; but no one stirred.
Silently we listened again.

A second time it came, still dim and strange,
A far "Halloo-o-o! Halloo-o-o!"
I would n't have believed such a ghostly cry
Could sound so clearly, too.
The sentries standing to the right and left
Neither spoke nor stirred.
They stood like stone. Can it be, I thought,
That nobody else has heard?

Then closer at hand, "Halloo-o-o! Halloo-o-o!"
Again the answering call.
"Quick!" said the sergeant as he pulled me down
In the shadow, close to the wall.
I dropped in a heap, and none too soon;
For scarcely a rifle-length away,
A man stood silent on the parados;
His face was a ghastly gray.

He carried a queer, old muzzle-loading gun;
The bayonet was dim with rust.
His top-boots were muddy, and his red uniform
Covered with blood and dust.
He waited for a moment, then waved his hand,
And they came in twos and threes:
Englishmen, Dutchmen, French cuirassiers,
Highlanders with great bare knees;

Pikemen, archers with huge crossbows,
Lancers and grenadiers;
Men in rusty armor, with battle-dented shields,
With axes and swords and spears.
Great blond giants with long, flowing hair
And limbs of enormous girth;
Yellow men with bludgeons, black men with knives,
From the wild, waste lands of the earth.

The one with the queer, old muzzle-loading gun
Jumped down with a light, quick leap.
He was head and shoulders higher than the parapet,
Though the trench was six feet deep.
The sentries stood like men in a dream,
With their faces to the German line.
He felt of their arms, their bodies, and their legs,
But they made no sound or sign.

He beckoned to the others, and three jumped in.
I was shaking like a man with a chill;
But I could n't help smiling when the sergeant said
Through his chattering teeth: " K-k-k-keep s-s-s-
still! "
A hairy-armed giant, with rings in his ears,
Stood looking down the dugout stair,
Hands on his knees. Slowly he turned,
And saw us lying there!

With a huge forefinger and a huge, thick thumb
He felt us over, limb by limb.
The two of us together would not have made
One man the size of him.

I could see his scorn, and my face burned hot,
Though my body was cold and numb,
When he spanned my chest so disdainfully
With only a finger and a thumb.

Suddenly the chatter of the sergeant's teeth
Stopped. He was angry, too;
And he whispered: "Are you game? Get the Maxim gun!"
I hugged him. "It will scare them blue."
Slowly, very slowly, we rose to our feet;
I was conscious of my knocking knees.
The murmur of their voices was an eery sound
Like wind in wintry trees.

I saw them staring from the tail of my eye
As the tripod legs we set.
We lifted the gun and clamped it on,
With the muzzle at the parapet.
Nervously I pushed in the tag of the belt;
The sergeant loaded and laid
Quietly, deftly; the click of the lock
Was the only sound he made.

"Ready!" he nodded. I turned my head
And nearly collapsed with fright.
Four of them were standing at my shoulder,
The others to the left and right.
Then, "Fire!" I shouted, and the gun leaped up
With a roar and a spurt of flame.
The sergeant gripped the handles while the belt ran through,
Never stopping to correct his aim.

Fearfully I turned, then jumped to my feet,
Forgetting all about the feed.
They were running like the wind up a long, steep hill,
With the thumb-and-finger man in the lead!
And high above the rattle and roar of the gun
I heard a despairing yell,
As Englishmen, Dutchmen, pikemen, bowmen,
Vanished in the night, pell-mell.

The men who were sleeping in the moonlit trench
Sat up and rubbed their eyes;
And one of them muttered in a drowsy voice:
"Wot to blazes is the row, you guys?"
The sergeant said: "That'll do! That'll do!"
But he whispered to me: "Keep mum!"
They would n't have believed that the row was all about
A finger and a huge, thick thumb.

James Norman Hall

THOMAS OF THE LIGHT HEART[1]

Facing the guns, he jokes as well
As any Judge upon the Bench;
Between the crash of shell and shell
His laughter rings along the trench;
He seems immensely tickled by a
Projectile which he calls a "Black Maria."

[1] Reprinted by permission from London *Punch*.

He whistles down the day-long road,
And, when the chilly shadows fall
And heavier hangs the weary load,
Is he down-hearted? Not at all.
'Tis then he takes a light and airy
View of the tedious route to Tipperary.

His songs are not exactly hymns;
He never learned them in the choir;
And yet they brace his dragging limbs
Although they miss the sacred fire;
Although his choice and cherished gems
Do not include "The Watch upon the Thames."

He takes to fighting as a game;
He does no talking, through his hat,
Of holy missions; all the same
He has his faith—be sure of that;
He'll not disgrace his sporting breed,
Nor play what isn't cricket. There's his creed.

Owen Seaman

October, 1914

THE FAUN COMPLAINS

They give me aëroplanes
Instead of birds and moths;
Instead of sunny fields
They give me mud-holes;

And for my day-long, night-long sacred hush,
(Flutter of leaves, bee-murmurs in the flowers,
Ripe seeded grass just stirring into music)
A hush wherein one seemed to hear
The invisible wheels of burning stars
Echoing upon the tiled paths of heaven—
For this they give me noise,
Harsh clangors of breaking metal,
Abrupt huge bursts of flame.

And for my woodland playmates,
Dryads, yellow subtle fauns,
Naked wanton hamadryads,
And stealthy water-girls
Who stole my honey and fruits
When I lay sleeping by their pools—
For these they give me men,
Odd, loud-voiced, fearsome, men,
Who mock my little horns and pointed ears!

Richard Aldington

ESCAPE

(*August 6, 1916.*—Officer previously reported died of wounds, now reported wounded: Robert Graves, Captain R., Royal Welsh Fusiliers.)

. . . But I *was* dead, an hour or more.
I woke when I'd already passed the door
That Cerberus guards, and half-way down the road
To Lethe, as an old Greek signpost showed.

Above me, on my stretcher swinging by,
I saw new stars in the subterrene sky:
A Cross, a Rose in bloom, a Cage with bars,
And a barbed Arrow feathered in fine stars.
I felt the vapors of forgetfulness
Float in my nostrils. Oh, may Heaven bless
Dear Lady Proserpine, who saw me wake,
And, stooping over me, for Henna's sake
Cleared my poor buzzing head and sent me back
Breathless, with leaping heart, along the track.
After me roared and clattered angry hosts
Of demons, heroes, and policeman-ghosts.
"Life! life! I can't be dead! I won't be dead!
Damned if I'll die for anyone!" I said . . .

Cerberus stands and grins above me now,
Wearing three heads—lion, and lynx, and sow.
"Quick, a revolver! But my Webley's gone,
Stolen! . . . No bombs . . . no knife . . . The crowd swarms on,
Bellows, hurls stones. . . . Not even a honeyed sop . . .
Nothing. . . . Good Cerberus! . . . Good dog! . . . but stop!
Stay! . . . A great luminous thought . . . I do believe
There's still some morphine that I bought on leave."
Then swiftly Cerberus' wide mouths I cram
With army biscuit smeared with ration jam;
And sleep lurks in the luscious plum and apple.
He crunches, swallows, stiffens, seems to grapple
With the all-powerful poppy . . . then a snore,

A crash; the beast blocks up the corridor
With monstrous hairy carcase, red and dun—
Too late! for I've sped through.
O Life! O Sun!

Robert Graves

"HATE"

"I was glad to get back to the trenches again
Where there's more of a 'uman feeling."

"London Joe"

HATE

THREE of us sat on the firing-bench
Watching the clouds sail by—
Watching the grey dawn blowing up
Like smoke across the sky.
And I thought, as I listened to London Joe
Tell of his leave in town,
"That's good *vers libre* with a Cockney twang;
I'll remember and write it down."

. . . . .

When I went 'ome on furlough
My missus says to me, "Joe,
'Ow many 'Uns 'ave you killed?
Them sneakin', lyin' 'Uns!"
Bitter? Not 'arf, she ain't!
An' they're all the same w'y in Lunnon.

My ole mate Bill, who's lame
An' couldn't enlist on that account,
Stood me a pint of ale
At the "Red Lion." Proper stuff it was
Arter this flat French beer.
"Well, 'ere's to old times!" says Bill,
Raisin' 'is glass,
"An' bad luck to the 'Uns you've sent below!
'Ow many you think you did for, Joe?"
'E arst if I'd shot and seen 'em fall,
Wanted the de-tails and wanted 'em all!

An' there was my old boss from Balham,
Give me a quid, which I took willin' enough,
Altho' I made a show o' refusin',
"That's all right, Joe, boy! Glad to do it!
It ain't much, but it'll 'elp you to 'ave a pleasant week.
But when you goes back to the trenches,
I wants you to take a crack at the 'Uns for me!
Git me a German for every penny in that sovereign!"
'E says,
Smashin' 'is fist on the table
An' upsettin' a bottle o' ink.
"Lay 'em out!" 'e says:
"Now tell me—'ow many you killed, abaht?"

Speakin' o' 'ymns o' 'ate,
They sing 'em in Lunnon, I'm tellin' yer straight!
You oughter see their faces when they arsts yer about
the 'Uns!
Lor' lummy! They aint *arf* a bloodthirsty lot!
An' the women as bad as the men.
I was glad to get back to the trenches again
Where there's more of a 'uman feelin'.
Now, us blokes out 'ere,
We knows as old Fritz ain't so bad as 'e's painted
(An' likely 'e knows the same abaht us).
What I mean is, 'e ain't no worse'n what we are,
Take 'im man for man.
There's good an' bad on both sides.
But d'you think you can s'y anything good
Abaht a German when yer in Lunnon?
Strike me pink! They won't believe yer!

'E's a 'Un, whatever that is;
Some kind o' wild beast, I reckon—
A cross between a snake
An' one o' them boars with 'orns on their noses
Out at the Zoo.

One night at the "Red Lion,"
I was talkin' abaht the time
Nobby Clark got 'it out in front of our barbed wire.
Remember 'ow we didn' find 'im till mornin',
An' the stretcher-bearers brought 'im in?
Broad daylight it was,
An' not a German firin' a shot
Till we got 'im back in the trench?
Well, there was fifteen or twenty in the pub,
An' not one of 'em was glad old Fritzie acted white!
Wouldn' that give yer the camel's 'ump?
They'd sooner 'ad Nobby an' stretcher-bearers killed,
If only the 'Uns, as they call 'em,
'Ad played dirty an' fired while they was bringin' 'im in.

Another time I was a-tellin' 'em
'Ow we shout back and forth acrost the trenches
When the lines is close together
An' we got fed up with pluggin' at each other.
An' I told 'em about the place
This side of Messines, where we was only twenty yards apart,
An' 'ow they chucked us over some o' their black bread,

Arter we'd throwed 'em 'arf a dozen tins o' bully.
Some of 'em didn't believe me, an' some did.
But sour? S'y! 'Ere! They was ready to kill me
For tryin' to make out that Fritzie's a 'uman bein'!

It's a funny thing. The farther yer git from the trenches
The more 'ate yer finds;
An' by the time yer gits to Lunnon,
Blimy! They could bite the 'eads off o' nails
If they was made in Germany!
I reckon they're just as cheerful an' lovin'-like in Berlin.
Give us a fag, son. I'm clean out.

James Norman Hall

THE PLACARD

"ENEMY'S Terrible Losses"—in letters of red on white
The placard flared its message out through the mist and rain:
Enemy's terrible losses—I saw the figures plain,
But their greatness had no meaning, no picture to serve my sight;
I was but glad when I read them, clear in the dim war-light,
Thinking: the sooner ended the more we have maimed and slain; . . .

But later when sleep forsook me the placard flashed again,
Burning my inward vision in the lonely deep of night.

The thousands stood no longer in printed figures of red—
They were heaped in desolate places, who heard their country's call,
And went out singing to battle, and now—lay quiet all.
And afar in steep-roofed cities, the homes of the enemy dead,
Went up the prayers of women who knew not yet of their fall,
And voices of other women who wept uncomforted.

Damon

GERMAN PRISONERS[1]

When first I saw you in the curious street
Like some platoon of soldier ghosts in grey,
My mad impulse was all to smite and slay,
To spit upon you—tread you 'neath my feet.
But when I saw how each sad soul did greet
My gaze with no sign of defiant frown,
How from tired eyes looked spirits broken down,
How each face showed the pale flag of defeat,
And doubt, despair, and disillusionment,
And how were grievous wounds on many a head,
And on your garb red-faced was other red,
And how you stooped as men whose strength was spent,
I knew that we had suffered each as other,
And could have grasped your hand and cried, "My brother!"

Joseph Lee

[1] Taken by permission from *Work-a-Day Warriors* by Joseph Lee, published by E. P. Dutton and Company, New York.

TO GERMANY

You are blind like us. Your hurt no man designed,
And no man claimed the conquest of your land.
But gropers both, through fields of thought confined,
We stumble and we do not understand.
You only saw your future bigly planned,
And we the tapering paths of our own mind,
And in each other's dearest ways we stand,
And hiss and hate. And the blind fight the blind.
When it is peace, then we may view again
With new-won eyes each other's truer form,
And wonder. Grown more loving-kind and warm
We'll grasp firm hands and laugh at the old pain,
When it is peace. But until peace, the storm,
The darkness and the thunder and the rain.

Charles Hamilton Sorley

BLIND MAN'S BATTLE

These enemies! How blind their aim,
Directed one against another!
In a lightless passion-flame,
Each blind man sees his blind brother
As that blind devil in his mind
That makes him and his brother blind!

E. H. Visiak

BATTLE

Impotent,
How impotent is all this clamor,
This destruction and contest . . .

Richard Aldington

BARRAGE

THUNDER,
The gallop of innumerable Walkyrie impetuous for battle,
The beating of vast eagle wings above Prometheus,
The contest of tall barbaric gods smitten by the hammer
of Thor,
Pursuit! Pursuit! Pursuit!
The huge black dogs of hell
Leaping, full-mouthed, in murderous pursuit!

Richard Aldington

IN THE TRENCHES II

IMPOTENT,
How impotent is all this clamor,
This destruction and contest . . .

Night after night comes the moon
Haughty and perfect;
Night after night the Pleiades sing
And Orion swings his belt across the sky.
Night after night the frost
Crumbles the hard earth.
Soon the spring will drop flowers
And patient, creeping stalk and leaf
Along these barren lines
Where the huge rats scuttle
And the hawk shrieks to the carrion crow.

Can you stay them with your noise?
Then kill winter with your cannon,
Hold back Orion with your bayonets,
And crush the spring leaf with your armies!

Richard Aldington

THE TROOPS[1]

Dim, gradual thinning of the shapeless gloom
Shudders to drizzling daybreak that reveals
Disconsolate men who stamp their sodden boots
And turn dulled, sunken faces to the sky
Haggard and hopeless. They, who have beaten down
The stale despair of night, must now renew
Their desolation in the truce of dawn,
Murdering the livid hours that grope for peace.

Yet these, who cling to life with stubborn hands,
Can grin through storms of death and find a gap
In the clawed, cruel tangles of his defence.
They march from safety, and the bird-sung joy
Of grass-green thickets, to the land where all
Is ruin, and nothing blossoms but the sky
That hastens over them where they endure
Sad, smoking, flat horizons, reeking woods,
And foundered trench-lines volleying doom for doom.

[1] Taken by permission from *Counter-Attack*, by Siegfried Sassoon, copyrighted by E. P. Dutton and Company, New York.

O my brave brown companions, when your souls
Flock silently away, and the eyeless dead
Shame the wild beast of battle on the ridge,
Death will stand grieving in that field of war
Since your unvanquished hardihood is spent.
And through some mooned Valhalla there will pass
Battalions and battalions, scarred from hell;
The unreturning army that was youth;
The legions who have suffered and are dust.

Siegfried Sassoon

ATTACK [1]

At dawn the ridge emerges massed and dun
In the wild purple of the glowering sun,
Smouldering through spouts of drifting smoke that shroud
The menacing scarred slope; and, one by one,
Tanks creep and topple forward to the wire.
The barrage roars and lifts. Then, clumsily bowed
With bombs and guns and shovels and battle-gear,
Men jostle and climb to meet the bristling fire.
Lines of grey, muttering faces, masked with fear,
They leave their trenches, going over the top,
While time ticks blank and busy on their wrists,
And hope, with furtive eyes and grappling fists,
Flounders in mud. O Jesu, make it stop!

Siegfried Sassoon

[1] Taken by permission from *Counter-Attack*, by Siegfried Sassoon, copyrighted by E. P. Dutton and Company, New York.

SHELL-SHOCK

From "Our Own Spoon River" [1]

Harry Joy, private in Company B,
Rainbow Division,
Was mustered out with a withered leg.
He had leapt the bar on Field Day
At six foot two with that leg;
But now he'd go crutching off
To sit on the willow-bank above the Dye Works.
Spoon River was sorry for Harry.
The Army Doctors hadn't found anything wrong:
There was no wound from toe to groin;
And electricity made it wiggle normally.
But it kept withering and withering,
As if the blood about his heart
Shrank from going down there any more,
Or as if the leg had a dream-soul of its own
That was sick of living altogether,
In Spoon River or anywhere . . .

That was the case, in fact,
As finally came out under psychoanalysis . . .
It seems Harry had used that leg
In one of the enemy trenches
To stamp on something . .

So, when the Government Expert disengaged
The "loathing-complex" in sub-conscious Harry,

[1] A section of a forthcoming volume of poems, *From Senegal to Sunset Hill.*

And re-arranged his thinking till he saw
The leg had merely done its duty, then
The withering stopped, the limb grew sound again,
And Harry was fit in body and in mind
For an eventual war with Mexico
Or England or Japan . . .
Spoon River was hugely astonished,
But very happy about it.

William Ellery Leonard

QUO VADITIS?

"WHERE do ye go,
Pale line of broken men?—
We only know
To die. Could we die twice, we'd die again.

"Wherefore?"—The call
Of a strange voice—was it of death or birth?—
Came to us all,
To all of us, the men of all the earth.

"And to what end?"
We ask not, but we see
The self-same light which kindles in our friend
Shine from the faces of our enemy.

"Same light, same doom!
And to what purpose?"—Deep
We lie in the same womb,
The slain, the slain, together in one sleep.

Margaret Sackville

THE OTHER SIDE

Being extracts from a letter written by Major Average, of the Royal Field Artillery, to a former subaltern of his battery, now in London, acknowledging a volume of the latter's poems.

. . . . . .

Just got your letter and the poems. Thanks.
You always were a brainy sort of chap,
Though pretty useless as a subaltern—
Too much imagination, not enough
Of that rare quality, sound commonsense.
And so you've managed to get on the Staff:
Influence, I suppose: a Captain, too!
How do tabs suit you? Are they blue or green?

About your book. I've read it carefully,
So has Macfaddyen (you remember him,
The light-haired chap, who joined us after Loos?);
And candidly, we don't think much of it.
The piece about the horses isn't bad;
But all the rest, excuse the word, are tripe—
The same old tripe we've read a thousand times.

My grief, but we're fed up to the back-teeth
With war-books, war-verse, all the eye-wash stuff
That seems to please the idiots at home.
You know the kind of thing, or used to know.

. . . . . .

Lord, if I'd half your brains, I'd write a book:
None of your sentimental platitudes,
But something real, vital; that should strip

The glamour from this outrage we call war,
Shewing it naked, hideous, stupid, vile—
One vast abomination. So that they
Who, coming after, till the ransomed fields
Where our lean corpses rotted in the ooze,
Reading my written words should understand
This stark stupendous horror, visualize
The unutterable foulness of it all . . .

I'd shew them, not your glamorous " glorious game,"
Which men play " jesting " " for their honour's sake "—
(A kind of Military Tournament,
With just a hint of danger—bound in cloth!) —
But War,—as war is now and always was:
A dirty loathsome, servile murder-job:—
Men, lousy, sleepless, ulcerous, afraid,
Toiling their hearts out in the pulling slime
That wrenches gum-boots down from bleeding heel
And cakes in itching arm-pits, navel, ears:
Men stunned to brainlessness, and gibbering:
Men driving men to death and worse than death:
Men maimed and blinded: men against machines—
Flesh versus iron, concrete, flame and wire:
Men choking out their souls in poison-gas:
Men squelched into the slime by trampling feet:
Men, disemboweled by guns five miles away,
Cursing, with their last breath, the living God
Because He made them, in His image, men. . . .

. . . . . .

So—were your talent mine—I'd write of war
For those who, coming after, know it not.

And if posterity should ask of me
What high, what base emotions keyed weak flesh
To face such torments, I would answer: "You!
Not for themselves, O daughters, grandsons, sons,
Your tortured forebears wrought this miracle;
Not for themselves, accomplished utterly
This loathiest task of murderous servitude;
But just because they realized that thus,
And only thus, by sacrifice, might they
Secure a world worth living in—*for you*" . . .

Good-night, my soldier-poet. Dormez bien!

Gilbert Frankau

The Old Barn, 1916.

FIELD AMBULANCE IN RETREAT

Via Dolorosa, Via Sacra

I

A STRAIGHT flagged road, laid on the rough earth,
A causeway of stone from beautiful city to city,
Between the tall trees, the slender, delicate trees,
Through the flat green land, by plots of flowers, by black canals thick with heat.

II

The road-makers made it well
Of fine stone, strong for the feet of the oxen and of the great Flemish horses,
And for the high wagons piled with corn from the harvest.

And the laborers are few;
They and their quiet oxen stand aside and wait
By the long road loud with the passing of the guns, the rush of armored cars, and the tramp of an army on the march forward to battle;
And, where the piled corn-wagons went, our dripping Ambulance carries home
Its red and white harvest from the fields.

III

The straight flagged road breaks into dust, into a thin white cloud,
About the feet of a regiment driven back league by league,
Rifles at trail, and standards wrapped in black funeral cloths. Unhasting, proud in retreat,
They smile as the Red Cross Ambulance rushes by.
(You know nothing of beauty and of desolation who have not seen
That smile of an army in retreat.)
They go: and our shining, beckoning danger goes with them,
And our joy in the harvests that we gathered in at night-fall in the fields;
And like an unloved hand laid on a beating heart
Our safety weighs us down.
Safety hard and strange; stranger and yet more hard
As, league after dying league, the beautiful, desolate Land
Falls back from the intolerable speed of an Ambulance in retreat
On the sacred, dolorous Way.

May Sinclair

THE REFUGEES

PAST the marching men, where the great road runs,
Out of burning Ypres three pale women came;
One was a widow (listen to the guns!)—
She wheeled a heaped-up barrow. One walked lame
And dragged two little children at her side,
Tired and coughing with the dust. The third
Nestled a dead child on her breast and tried
To suckle him. They never spoke a word. . . .
So they came down along the great Ypres road.
A soldier stayed his mirth to watch them pass,
Turned and in silence helped them with their load,
And led them to a field and gave them bread. . . .
I saw them hide their faces in the grass
And cry, as women cried when Christ was dead.

William G. Shakespeare

THE WAR SPIRIT

This is the Dark Immortal's hour;
His victory, whoever fail.

A. E.

THE PIED PIPER

"Never before have four hundred million rats followed the lure of the shrill pipe of the rat-catcher."

Nicolai, *Biology of War*

THE huge Pied Piper, in a giant dance,
Began his piping on the fields of France.
The huge Pied Piper, with a fife of steel,
Danced through the nations, toe and heel.
Four crazed years, under winds and the moon,
The Millions followed in a jigging rigadoon.

For his legs were hosed in stripèd bands,
And his sleeves were stripèd to the fingering hands,
And his cape was stripèd to his piping throat,
And the stripèd cap fluttered to step and note . . .
Stripes up and down, and left and right . . .
Red, green, yellow, black, blue, white . . .
Speckled between with star and crest—
But the red stripes O! they outnumbered the rest.
And when failed the lure of his garments pied,
He juggled new bunting from his vest inside.
So four crazed years, under winds and the moon,
The Millions followed in a jigging rigadoon.

With a fife of steel to puckered lips,
And two cheeks puffing for his finger-tips,
He shrilled each tune of the lure of war,
And danced each measure of his repertoire:

He piped and he jigged of fear and hate,
Of love of country and glory of state;
And he piped of god and he piped of man—
This giant Jester, this Charlatan.
And for those who loathed his piping shrill
He piped a tune more alluring still:
" Then hurry to my piping, more than ever,
To *end* my piping, now or never! "
And four crazed years, under winds and the moon,
The Millions followed in a jigging rigadoon.

And the few still slack, as he flung pied cape,
And the few still slack, as he piped his jape,
O the few still slack, as each million reels,
Jigging to the river, behind his heels,
They whipped or they hanged to bar or tree,
And passed with the Piper down the lea . . .

To a red, red river, all the host,—
And the Piper walked, like a shadow or ghost . . .
And the Piper walked, like Christ on the sea
In the sunset-storm of Galilee . . .
And he danced on the waters, to his latest tune,
And the millions perished in a jigging rigadoon.

William Ellery Leonard

MISERICORDIA

He earned his bread by making wooden soldiers,
With beautiful golden instruments,
Riding dapple-grey horses.
But when he heard the fanfare of trumpets

And the long rattle of drums
As the army marched out of the city,
He took all his soldiers
And burned them in the grate;
And that night he fashioned a ballet-dancer
Out of tinted tissue-paper,
And the next day he started to carve a Pietà
On the steel hilt
Of a cavalry sword.

Amy Lowell

NAPOLEON'S TOMB

THROUGH the great doors, where Paris flowed incessant,
Fell certain dimness, as of some poised hour,
Caught from the ashes of the Infinite
And prisoned there in solemn purple state,
To make illusion for dead majesty!
A dusk of greatness, such as well might brood
Beneath the wings of Destiny's proud day;
A calm, immortal twilight mantling up
To the great dome, where painted triumph rides
High o'er the dust that once bestrode it all—
Nor ever fame had fairer firmament!
It was as though Ambition still should live
In marble over him; as though his dream—
From whose high tower and colored casements round
He, with a royal thievery in his eye,
Did look upon the apple of a world—
Should take this shape, and being clothed with walls,

Stand, in such permanence as matter gives,
To house his glory through the centuries.

. . . . . .

Then I went in, with Paris pressing slow,
And saw the long blue shadows folding down
Upon the casket of the Emperor.
A soldier in a faded uniform
Stood close beside me. He was one of those
Who die and leave no lament on the wind . . .
And straightway gazing on him I beheld
Not death's magnificence; not fame's hushed tomb—
But grim Oblivion, and the fields of France!
And on some nameless hillside, where the night
Sets out wild flaming candles for the dead,
Innumerable corpses palely sprawled
Beneath the silent, cold, anonymous stars.

Dana Burnet

Paris, 1918

GODS OF WAR

Fate wafts us from the pygmies' shore:
We swim beneath the epic skies:
A Rome and Carthage war once more,
And wider empires are the prize;
Where the beaked galleys clashed, lo, these
Our iron dragons of the seas!

High o'er the cloudy battle sweep
The wingéd chariots in their flight.
The steely creatures of the deep
Cleave the dark waters' ancient night.

Below, above, in wave, in air
New worlds for conquest everywhere.

More terrible than spear or sword
Those stars that burst with fiery breath:
More loud the battle cries are poured
Along a hundred leagues of death.
So do they fight. How have ye warred,
Defeated Armies of the Lord?

This is the Dark Immortal's hour;
His victory, whoever fail;
His prophets have not lost their power:
Cæsar and Attila prevail.
These are your legions still, proud ghosts,
These myriad embattled hosts.

How wanes Thine empire, Prince of Peace!
With the fleet circling of the suns
The ancient gods their power increase.
Lo, how Thine own anointed ones
Do pour upon the warring bands
The devil's blessings from their hands.

Who dreamed a dream 'mid outcasts born
Could overbrow the pride of kings?
They pour on Christ the ancient scorn.
His Dove its gold and silver wings
Has spread. Perhaps it nests in flame
In outcasts who abjure His name.

Choose ye your rightful gods, nor pay
Lip reverence that the heart denies,
O Nations! Is not Zeus to-day,
The thunderer from the epic skies,
More than the Prince of Peace? Is Thor
Not nobler for a world at war?

They fit the dreams of power we hold,
Those gods whose names are with us still.
Men in their image made of old
The high companions of their will.
Who seek an airy empire's pride,
Would they pray to the Crucified?

O outcast Christ, it was too soon
For flags of battle to be furled
While life was yet at the hot noon.
Come in the twilight of the world:
Its kings may greet Thee without scorn
And crown Thee then without a thorn.

A. E.

III

THE SUPREME SACRIFICE

Greater Love hath no man than this . . .

"ALL THE HILLS AND VALES ALONG"

All the hills and vales along
Earth is bursting into song,
And the singers are the chaps
Who are going to die perhaps.
O sing, marching men,
Till the valleys ring again.
Give your gladness to earth's keeping,
So be glad, when you are sleeping.

Cast away regret and rue,
Think what you are marching to.
Little live, great pass.
Jesus Christ and Barabbas
Were found the same day.
This died, that went his way.
So sing with joyful breath.
For why, you are going to death.
Teeming earth will surely store
All the gladness that you pour.

Earth that never doubts nor fears,
Earth that knows of death, not tears,
Earth that bore with joyful ease
Hemlock for Socrates,
Earth that blossomed and was glad
'Neath the cross that Christ had,

Shall rejoice and blossom too
When the bullet reaches you.
Wherefore, men marching
On the road to death, sing!
Pour your gladness on earth's head,
So be merry, so be dead.

From the hills and valleys earth
Shouts back the sound of mirth,
Tramp of feet and lilt of song
Ringing all the road along.
All the music of their going,
Ringing, swinging, glad song-throwing,
Earth will echo still, when foot
Lies numb and voice mute.
On, marching men, on
To the gates of death with song.
Sow your gladness for earth's reaping,
So you may be glad, though sleeping.
Strew your gladness on earth's bed,
So be merry, so be dead.

Charles Hamilton Sorley

INTO BATTLE

THE naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze;

And Life is Color and Warmth and Light,
  And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
  And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
  Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
  And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
  Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
  Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star and the Sisters Seven,
  Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
  They stand to him each one a friend;
They gently speak in the windy weather;
  They guide to valley and ridges' end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
  And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
  As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, " Brother, brother,
  If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another;
  Brother, sing."

In dreary doubtful waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers;
O patient eyes, courageous hearts!

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only Joy-of-Battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

Julian Grenfell

Flanders, April, 1915.

NEARER

Nearer and ever nearer. . . .
My body, tired but tense,
Hovers 'twixt vague pleasure
And tremulous confidence.

Arms to have and use them
And a soul to be made
Worthy if not worthy;
If afraid, unafraid.

To endure for a little,
To endure and have done;
Men I love about me,
Over me the sun!

And should at last suddenly
Fly the speeding death,
The four great quarters of heaven
Receive this little breath.

Robert Nichols

THE BUGLER

(*Written in a German prison camp*)

God dreamed a man;
Then, having firmly shut
Life, like a precious metal in his fist,
Withdrew, His labour done. Thus did begin
Our various divinity and sin—
For some to ploughshares did the metal twist,
And others—dreaming Empires—straightway cut
Crowns for their aching foreheads. Others beat
Long nails and heavy hammers for the feet
Of their forgotten Lord. (Who dare to boast
That he is guiltless?) Others coined it: most
Did with it—simply nothing. (Here again
Who cries his innocence?) Yet doth remain
Metal unmarred, to each man more or less,
Whereof to fashion perfect loveliness.

For me, I do but bear within my hand
(For sake of Him, our Lord, now long forsaken)
A simple bugle such as may awaken
With one high morning note a drowsing man:
That wheresoe'er within my motherland
The sound may come, 't will echo far and wide,
Like pipes of battle calling up a clan,
Trumpeting men through beauty to God's side.

F. W. Harvey

THE LAST POST

(*June, 1916*)

THE bugler sent a call of high romance—
Lights out! Lights out!—to the deserted square:
On the thin brazen notes he threw a prayer.
God, if it's *this* for me next time in France,
Spare me the phantom bugle as I lie
Dead in the gas and smoke and roar of guns,
Dead in a row with the other shattered ones,
Lying so stiff and still under the sky—
Jolly young Fusiliers, too good to die.
The music ceased, and the red sunset flare
Was blood about his head as he stood there.

Robert Graves

MORITURI TE SALUTANT

IN this last hour, before the bugles blare
The summons of the dawn, we turn again
To you, dear country, you whom unaware

Through summer years of idle selfishness
We still have loved—who loved us none the less,
Knowing the destined hour would find us men.

O thrill and laughter of the busy town!
O flower-valleys, trees against the skies,
Wild moor and woodland, glade and sweeping down,—
O land of our desire!—like men asleep
We have let pass the years, nor felt you creep
So close into our hearts' dear sanctities.

We have been dreamers; but our dreams are cast
Henceforward in a more heroic mould;
We have kept faith with our immortal past.
Knights, we have found the lady of our love;
Minstrels, have heard great harmonies, above
The lyrics that enraptured us of old.

The dawn's aglow with lustre of the sun . . .
O love, O burning passion, that has made
Our day illustrious till its hours are done,—
Fire our dull hearts, that in our sun's eclipse,
When Death stoops low to kiss us on the lips,
He still may find us singing unafraid!

One thing we know, that love so greatly spent
Dies not when lovers die:—from hand to hand
We pass the torch and perish, well content
If in dark years to come our countrymen
Feel the divine flame leap in them again,
And so remember us, and understand.

P. H. B. Lyon

A PETITION

All that a man might ask, thou hast given me, England,
Birth-right and happy childhood's long heart's-ease,
And love whose range is deep beyond all sounding
And wider than all seas.

A heart to front the world and find God in it,
Eyes blind enow, but not too blind to see
The lovely things behind the dross and darkness,
And lovelier things to be.

And friends whose loyalty time nor death shall weaken,
And quenchless hope and laughter's golden store;
All that a man might ask thou hast given me, England,
Yet grant thou one thing more:

That now when envious foes would spoil thy splendour,
Unversed in arms, a dreamer such as I
May in thy ranks be deemed not all unworthy,
England, for thee to die.

R. E. Vernède

DULCE ET DECORUM EST

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flare we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.

Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame, all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys! An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But some one still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If, in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin,
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs
Bitten as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
Pro patria mori.

Wilfred Owen

I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH . . .

I HAVE a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.

It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 't were better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

Alan Seeger

IN FLANDERS FIELDS[1]

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky,
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead; short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe!
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high!
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

John McRae

COMRADES: AN EPISODE

Before, before he was aware
The "Very" light had risen . . . on the air
It hung glistering . . .
And he could not stay his hand
From moving to the barbed wire's broken strand.
A rifle cracked.
He fell.

[1] Reprinted by permission from London *Punch*.

Night waned. He was alone. A heavy shell
Whispered itself passing high, high overhead.
His wound was wet to his hand: for still it bled
On to the glimmering ground.
Then with a slow, vain smile his wound he bound,
Knowing, of course, he'd not see home again—
Home whose thought he put away.
His men
Whispered: " Where's Mister Gates? " " Out on the wire."
" I'll get him," said one. . . .
Dawn blinked, and the fire
Of the Germans heaved up and down the line.
"Stand to! "
Too late! " I'll get him." " O the swine!
When we might get him in yet safe and whole! "
" Corporal did n't see 'un fall out on patrol,
Or he'd 'a got 'un." " Sssh! "
" No talking there."
A whisper: " 'A went down at the last flare."
Meanwhile the Maxims toc-toc-tocked; their swish
Of bullets told death lurked against the wish.
No hope for him!
His corporal, as one shamed,
Vainly and helplessly his ill-luck blamed.

. . . . . .

Then Gates slowly saw the morn
Break in a rosy peace through the lone thorn
By which he lay, and felt the dawn-wind pass
Whispering through the pallid, stalky grass
Of No-Man's Land. . . .

And the tears came
Scaldingly sweet, more lovely than a flame.
He closed his eyes: he thought of home
And grit his teeth. He knew no help could come. . . .

. . . . . .

The silent sun over the earth held sway,
Occasional rifles cracked, and far away
A heedless speck, a 'plane, slid on alone,
Like a fly traversing a cliff of stone.

"I must get back," said Gates aloud, and heaved
At his body. But it lay bereaved
Of any power. He could not wait till night . . .
And he lay still. Blood swam across his sight.
Then with a groan:
"No luck ever! Well, I must die alone."
Occasional rifles cracked. A cloud that shone,
Gold-rimmed, blackened the sun and then was gone. . . .
The sun still smiled. The grass sang in its play.
Someone whistled: "Over the hills and far away."
Gates watched silently the swift, swift sun
Burning his life before it was begun. . . .

Suddenly he heard Corporal Timmins' voice: "Now then,
'Urry up with that tea."
"Hi Ginger!" "Bill!" His men!
Timmins and Jones and Wilkinson (the 'bard'),
And Hughes and Simpson. It was hard
Not to see them: Wilkinson, stubby, grim,
With his "No, sir," "Yes, sir," and the slim

Simpson: " Indeed, sir? " (while it seemed he winked
Because his smiling left eye always blinked),
And Corporal Timmins, straight and blond and wise,
With his quiet-scanning, level, hazel eyes;
And all the others . . . tunics that did n't fit . . .
A dozen different sorts of eyes. O, it
Was hard to lie there! Yet he must. But no:
" I've got to die. I'll get to them. I'll go."

Inch by inch he fought, breathless and mute,
Dragging his carcase like a famished brute. . . .
His head was hammering, and his eyes were dim;
A bloody sweat seemed to ooze out of him
And freeze along his spine. . . . Then he'd lie still
Before another effort of his will
Took him one nearer yard.

. . . . . .

The parapet was reached.
He could not rise to it. A lookout screeched:
" Mr. Gates! "
Three figures in one breath
Leaped up. Two figures fell in toppling death;
And Gates was lifted in. " Who's hit? " said he.
" Timmins and Jones." " Why did they that for me?—
I'm gone already! " Gently they laid him prone
And silently watched.
He twitched. They heard him moan
" Why for me? " His eyes roamed round, and none replied.
" I see it was alone I should have died."
They shook their heads. Then, " Is the doctor here? "
" He's coming, sir; he's hurryin', no fear."

"No good . . .
Lift me." They lifted him.
He smiled and held his arms out to the dim,
And in a moment passed beyond their ken,
Hearing him whisper, "O my men, my men!"

Robert Nichols

In Hospital, London
Autumn, 1915

HOW RIFLEMAN BROWN CAME TO VALHALLA

To the lower Hall of Valhalla, to the heroes of no renown,
Relieved from his spell at the listening-post, came Rifleman Joseph Brown.
With never a rent in his khaki nor smear of blood on his face,
He flung his pack from his shoulders and made for an empty place.

The Killer-men of Valhalla looked up from the banquet-board
At the unfouled breech of his rifle, at the unfleshed point of his sword;
And the unsung dead of the trenches, the kings who have never a crown,
Demanded his pass to Valhalla from Rifleman Joseph Brown.

"Who comes, unhit, to the party?" A one-legged Corporal spoke,
And the gashed heads nodded approval through the rings of the Endless Smoke:

"Who comes for the beer and the Woodbines of the never-closed Canteen,
"With the barrack-shine on his bayonet and a full-charged magazine?"

Then Rifleman Brown looked round him at the nameless men of the Line—
At the wounds of the shell and the bullet, at the burns of the bomb and the mine;
At the tunics, virgin of medals but crimson-clotted with blood;
At the ankle-boots and the puttees, caked stiff with the Flanders mud;
At the myriad short Lee-Enfields that crowded the rifle-rack,
Each with its blade to the sword-boss brown and its muzzle powder-black:

And Rifleman Brown said never a word; yet he felt in the soul of his soul
His right to the beer of the lower Hall, though he came to drink of it, whole;
His right to the fags of the free Canteen, to a seat at the banquet-board,
Though he came to the men who had killed their man with never a man to his sword.

"Who speaks for the stranger Rifleman, O boys of the free Canteen?
Who passes the chap with the unmaimed limbs and the kit that is far too clean?"

The gashed heads eyed him above their beers, the gashed lips sucked at their smoke:
There were three at the board of his own platoon, but not a man of them spoke.

His mouth was mad for the tankard froth and the biting whiff of the fag,
But he knew that he might not speak for himself to the dead men who do not brag.

A gun-butt crashed on the gateway, a man came staggering in;
His head was cleft with a great red wound from the temple-bone to the chin,
His blade was dyed to the bayonet-boss with the clots that were scarcely dry;
And he cried to the men who had killed their man: "Who passes the Rifleman? I!
By the four I slew, by the shell I stopped, if my feet be not too late,
I speak the word for Rifleman Brown that a chap may speak for his mate."

The dead of lower Valhalla, the heroes of dumb renown,
They pricked their ears to a tale of the earth as they set their tankards down.
"My mate was on sentry this evening when the General happened along,
And asked what he'd do in a gas-attack. Joe told him: 'Beat on the gong.'
'What else?'
'Open fire, Sir,' Joe answered.

'Good God, man,' our General said,
'By the time you'd beaten that bloodstained gong the chances are you'd be dead.
Just think, lad.'
'Gas helmet, of course, Sir.'
'Yes, damn it, and gas helmet first.'
So Joe stood dumb to attention, and wondered why he'd been cursed."

The gashed heads turned to the Rifleman, and now it seemed that they knew
Why the face that had never a smear of blood was stained to the jawbones, blue.
"He was posted again at midnight." The scarred heads craned to the voice,
As the man with the blood-red bayonet spoke up for the mate of his choice.
"You know what it's like in a listening-post, the Very candles aflare,
Their bullets smacking the sand-bags, our Vickers combing your hair,
How your ears and your eyes get jumpy, till each known tuft that you scan
Moves and crawls in the shadows till you'd almost swear it was man;
You know how you peer and snuff at the night when the North-East gas-winds blow."
"By the One who made us and maimed us," quoth lower Valhalla, "we know!"

"Sudden, out of the blackness, sudden as Hell there came
Roar and rattle of rifles, spurts of machine-gun flame;

And Joe stood up on the forward sap to try and fathom
the game.
Sudden, their shells come screaming; sudden, his nostrils
sniff
The sickening reek of the rotten pears, the death that
kills with a whiff.
Death! and he knows it certain, as he bangs on his
cartridge-case,
With the gas-cloud's claws at his windpipe and the gas
cloud's wings on his face . . .
We heard his gong in our dug-out, he only whacked on
it twice,
We whipped our gas-bags over our heads, and manned
the step in a trice—
For the cloud would have caught us as sure as Fate if
he'd taken the Staff's advice."

His head was cleft with a great red wound from the chin
to the temple-bone,
But his voice was as clear as a sounding gong, "I'll be
damned if I'll drink alone,
Not even in lower Valhalla! Is he free of your free
Canteen,
My mate who comes with the unfleshed point and the
full-charged magazine?"

The gashed heads rose at the Rifleman o'er the rings of
the Endless Smoke,
And loud as the roar of a thousand guns Valhalla's an-
swer broke,

And loud as the crash of a thousand shells their tankards clashed on the board:
"He is free of the mess of the Killer-men, your mate of the unfleshed sword;
For we know the worth of his deed on earth; as we know the speed of the death
Which catches its man by the back of the throat and gives him water for breath;
As we know how the hand at the helmet-cloth may tarry seconds too long,
When the very life of the front-line trench is staked on the beat of a gong.
By the four you slew, by the case he smote, by the gray gas-cloud and the green,
We pass your mate for the Endless Smoke and the beer of the free canteen."

In the lower hall of Valhalla, with the heroes of no renown,
With our nameless dead of the Marne and the Aisne, of the Mons and of Wipers town,
With the men who killed ere they died for us, sits Rifleman Joseph Brown.

Gilbert Frankau

THE GOING

(*For R. B.*)

He's gone.
I do not understand.
I only know

That as he turned to go
And waved his hand
In his young eyes a sudden glory shone:
And I was dazzled by a sunset glow,
And he was gone.

Wilfrid Wilson Gibson

23d April, 1915

THE DEAD

I

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
That men call age; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

Blow, bugles, blow! They brought us, for our dearth,
Holiness, lacked so long, and Love, and Pain.
Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage;
And Nobleness walks in our ways again;
And we have come into our heritage.

II

These hearts were woven of human joys and cares,
Washed marvellously with sorrow, swift to mirth.
The years had given them kindness. Dawn was theirs,
And sunset, and the colours of the earth.

These had seen movement and heard music; known
Slumber and waking; loved; gone proudly friended;
Felt the quick stir of wonder; sat alone;
Touched flowers and furs and cheeks. All this is ended.

There are waters blown by changing winds to laughter
And lit by the rich skies, all day. And after,
Frost, with a gesture, stays the waves that dance
And wandering loveliness. He leaves a white
Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance,
A width, a shining peace, under the night.

Rupert Brooke

ROUGE BOUQUET

In a wood they call the Rouge Bouquet
There is a new-made grave to-day,
Built by never a spade nor pick
Yet covered with earth ten metres thick.
There lie many fighting men,
  Dead in their youthful prime,
Never to laugh nor love again
  Nor taste the Summertime.
For Death came flying through the air
And stopped his flight at the dugout stair,
Touched his prey and left them there,
  Clay to clay.
He hid their bodies stealthily
In the soil of the land they fought to free
  And fled away.

Now over the graves abrupt and clear
  Three volleys ring;
And perhaps their brave young spirits hear
  The bugle sing:
" Go to sleep!
Go to sleep!
Slumber well where the shell screamed and fell.
Let your rifles rest on the muddy floor,
You will not need them any more.
Danger's past;
Now at last,
Go to sleep! "

There is on earth no worthier grave
To hold the bodies of the brave
Than this place of pain and pride
Where they nobly fought and nobly died.
Never fear but in the skies
Saints and angels stand
Smiling with their holy eyes
  On this new-come band.
St. Michael's sword darts through the air
And touches the aureole on his hair
As he sees them stand saluting there,
  His stalwart sons;
And Patrick, Brigid, Columkill
Rejoice that in veins of warriors still
  The Gael's blood runs.
And up to Heaven's doorway floats,
  From the wood called Rouge Bouquet,
A delicate cloud of buglenotes

That softly say:
"Farewell!
Farewell!
Comrades true, born anew, peace to you!
Your souls shall be where the heroes are
And your memory shine like the morning-star.
Brave and dear,
Shield us here.
Farewell!"

Joyce Kilmer

THE FALLEN SUBALTERN

THE starshells float above, the bayonets glisten;
We bear our fallen friend without a sound;
Below the waiting legions lie and listen
To us, who march upon the burial-ground.

Wound in the flag of England, here we lay him;
The guns will flash and thunder o'er the grave;
What other winding sheet should now array him,
What other music should salute the brave?

As goes the Sun-god in his chariot glorious,
When all his golden banners are unfurled,
So goes the soldier, fallen but victorious,
And leaves behind a twilight in the world.

And those who come this way, in days hereafter,
Will know that here a boy for England fell,
Who looked at danger with the eyes of laughter,
And on the charge his days were ended well.

One last salute; the bayonets clash and glisten;
With arms reversed we go without a sound:
One more has joined the men who lie and listen
To us, who march upon their burial-ground.

Herbert Asquith

1915

A CROSS IN FLANDERS

In the face of death, they say, he joked—he had no fear;
His comrades, when they laid him in a Flanders grave,
Wrote on a rough-hewn cross—a Calvary stood near—
"Without a fear he gave

"His life, cheering his men, with laughter on his lips."
So wrote they, mourning him. Yet was there only one
Who fully understood his laughter, his gay quips,
One only, she alone—

She who, not so long since, when love was new-confest,
Herself toyed with light laughter while her eyes were dim,
And jested, while with reverence despite her jest
She worshipped God and him.

She knew—O Love, O Death!—his soul had been at grips
With the most solemn things. For *she*, was she not dear?
Yes, he was brave, most brave, with laughter on his lips,
The braver for his fear!

G. Rostrevor Hamilton

"ON THE FIELD OF HONOR"

(T. M. Kettle—killed at Ginchy, 1916)

You always were for sides, your hand
Rose to the shock of partisan blows.
And now, at ease in No Man's Land,
You sprawl between your friends and foes.
The carved mouth and the challenging eye,
Your loud scorn and your quiet faith—
Who would believe that *you* would lie
In the anonymous ranks of death.

I wonder how you take your rest,
Whose restless vigor tossed and burned;
And do you find earth's stony breast
Warmer than those from which you turned.
Are you content with this, the goal
Of all your purposes and pains;
Knowing the iron in your soul
Will not corrode, for all the rains?

An end to questions now. You are
Their silent answer on this red
Terrain where every flickering star
Is a last candle by your bed.
The guns are stilled and you are part
Of the clean winds that smooth your brow.
O vigilant mind, O tireless heart,
Try sleeping now.

Louis Untermeyer

A YOUNG TREE

(*For J. W.*)

THERE are so few trees here, so few young trees,
That Fate might have been merciful
And turned aside the shock of flame
That strewed your branches on the torn-up earth,
Ending the joy we had in your fresh leaves.

And every dear young lad that's killed
Seems to cry out:
"We are so few, so very few,
Could not our fate have been more merciful?"

Richard Aldington

FOR THE FALLEN

WITH proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

Laurence Binyon

THE DEBT

No more old England will they see—
Those men who've died for you and me.

So lone and cold they lie; but we,
We still have life; we still may greet
Our pleasant friends in home and street;
We still have life, are able still
To climb the turf of Bignor Hill,
To see the placid sheep go by,
To hear the sheep-dog's eager cry,

To feel the sun, to taste the rain,
To smell the Autumn's scents again
Beneath the brown and gold and red
Which old October's brush has spread,
To hear the robin in the lane,
To look upon the English sky.

So young they were, so strong and well,
Until the bitter summons fell—
Too young to die.
Yet there on foreign soil they lie,
So pitiful, with glassy eye
And limbs all tumbled anyhow:
Quite finished, now.

On every heart—lest we forget—
Secure at home—engrave this debt!

Too delicate is flesh to be
The shield that nations interpose
'Twixt red Ambition and his foes—
The bastion of Liberty.
So beautiful their bodies were,
Built with so exquisite a care:
So young and fit and lithe and fair.
The very flower of us were they,
The very flower, but yesterday!
Yet now so pitiful they lie,
Where love of country bade them hie
To fight this fierce Caprice—and die.
All mangled now, where shells have burst,
And lead and steel have done their worst;

The tender tissues ploughed away,
The years' slow processes effaced:
The Mother of us all—disgraced.

And some leave wives behind, young wives;
Already some have launched new lives:
A little daughter, little son—
For thus this blundering world goes on.
But never more will any see
The old secure felicity,
The kindnesses that made us glad
Before the world went mad.
They'll never hear another bird,
Another gay or loving word—
Those men who lie so cold and lone,
Far in a country not their own;

Those men who died for you and me,
That England still might sheltered be
And all our lives go on the same
(Although to live is almost shame).

E. V. Lucas

EDITH CAVELL

The world hath its own dead; great motions start
In human breasts, and make for them a place
In that hushed sanctuary of the race
Where every day men come, kneel, and depart.
Of them, O English nurse, henceforth thou art
A name to pray on, and to all a face
Of household consecration; such His grace
Whose universal dwelling is the heart

O gentle hands that soothed the soldier's brow
And knew no service save of Christ's the Lord!
Thy country now is all humanity.
How like a flower thy womanhood doth show
In the harsh scything of the German sword.
And beautifies the world that saw it die!

George Edward Woodberry

NOT TO KEEP

They sent him back to her. The letter came
Saying . . . and she could have him. And before
She could be sure there was no hidden ill
Under the formal writing, he was in her sight—
Living.—They gave him back to her alive—
How else? They are not known to send the dead—
And not disfigured visibly. His face?—
His hands? She had to look—to ask
"What was it, dear?" And she had given all
And still she had all—*they* had—they the lucky!
Wasn't she glad now? Everything seemed won,
And all the rest for them permissible ease.
She had to ask "What was it, dear?"
"Enough,
Yet not enough. A bullet through and through,
High in the breast. Nothing but what good care
And medicine and rest—and you a week,
Can cure me of to go again." The same
Grim giving to do over for them both.
She dared no more than ask him with her eyes

How was it with him for a second trial.
And with his eyes he asked her not to ask.
They had given him back to her, but not to keep.

Robert Frost

DURING DARKNESS

Take me under thy wing, O death.
I am tired, I am cold . . .
Take me under thy wing, O great, impartial bird;
Take me, carry me hence
And let me sleep.
For the soil that was once so sweet is sour with rotting dead;
The air is acrid with battle fumes;
And even the sky is obscured by the cannon's smoke.
Beauty and Peace—where are they?
They have gone, and to what avail?
The mountains stand where the mountains stood,
And the polluted seas boil in the selfsame basin,
Unconcerned.
The beast in man is again on the trail,
Swinging his arms and sniffing the air for blood.
And what was gentle,
What bore fruit with patient pain, is gone.

Take me under thy wing,
O Death.

Jean Starr Untermeyer

SPRING IN WAR-TIME

I FEEL the spring far off, far off,
The faint, far scent of bud and leaf—
Oh, how can spring take heart to come
To a world in grief,
Deep grief?

The sun turns north, the days grow long,
Later the evening star grows bright—
How can the daylight linger on
For men to fight,
Still fight?

The grass is waking in the ground,
Soon it will rise and blow in waves—
How can it have the heart to sway
Over the graves,
New graves?

Under the boughs where lovers walked
The apple-blooms will shed their breath—
But what of all the lovers now
Parted by Death,
Grey Death?

Sara Teasdale

"THERE WILL COME SOFT RAINS"

THERE will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,
And swallows calling with their shimmering sound;

And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild-plum trees in tremulous white;

Robins will wear their feathery fire
Whistling their whims on a low fence-wire;

And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done.

Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,
If mankind perished utterly;

And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn,
Would scarcely know that we were gone.

Sara Teasdale

MISSING

Lord, how can he be dead?
For he stood there just this morn
With the live blood in his cheek
And the live light on his head?
Dost Thou remember, Lord, when he was born,
And all my heart went forth thy praise to seek,
(I, a creator even as Thou,)—
To force Thee to confess
The little, young, heart-breaking loveliness,
Like willow-buds in Spring, upon his brow?
Newest of unfledged things,
All perfect but the wings.

Master, I lit my tender candle-light
  Straight at the living fire that rays abroad
  From thy dread altar, God!
How should it end in night?

Lord, in my time of trouble, of tearing strife,
  Even then I loved thy will, even then I knew
That nothing is so beautiful as life! . . .
  Is not the world's great woe thine anguish too?
    It hath not passed, thine hour,
  Again Thou kneelest in the olive-wood.
    The lands are drunk with sharp-set lust of power,
  The kings are thirsting, and they pour thy blood.
But we, the mothers, we that found thy trace
Down terrible ways, that looked upon thy face
And are not dead—how should we doubt thy grace?

How many women in how many lands—
  Almost I weep for them as for mine own—
  That wait beside the desolate hearthstone!
Always before the embattled army stands
  The horde of women like a phantom wall,
Barring the way with desperate, futile hands.
  The first charge tramples them, the first of all!

Dost Thou remember, Lord, the hearts that prayed
  As down the shouting village street they swung,
  The beautiful fighting-men? The sunlight flung
His keen young face up like an unfleshed blade . . .
  O God, so young!

Lord, hast Thou gone away?
Once more through all the worlds thy touch I seek.
Lord, how can he be dead?
For he stood here just this day
With the live blood in his cheek,
And the live light on his head?
Lord, how can he be dead?

Beatrice W. Ravenel

NOT DEAD

WALKING through trees to cool my heat and pain,
I know that David's with me here again.
All that is simple, happy, strong, he is.
Caressingly I stroke
Rough bark of the friendly oak.
A brook goes bubbling by: the voice is his.
Turf burns with pleasant smoke;
I laugh at chaffinch and at primroses.
All that is simple, happy, strong, he is.
Over the whole world, in a little while,
Breaks his slow smile.

Robert Graves

THE HEART CRY

SHE turned the page of wounds and death
With trembling fingers. In a breath
The gladness of her life became
Naught but a memory and a name.

Farewell! Farewell! I might not share
The perils it was yours to dare.
Dauntless you fronted death: for me
Rests to face life as fearlessly.

F. W. Bourdillon

A NEW HEAVEN

We have our hopes and fears that flout us,
We have our illusions, changeless through the years;
We have our dreams of rest after long struggle,
After our toil is finished, folded hands.
But for those who have fallen in battle,
What Heaven can there be?

Heaven is full of those who can remember
The ebbing-out of life that slowly lingered
At the dark doors of pain;
Heaven is full of those who dropped their burden
At last through weariness;
But these the War has taken
Remember naught but their own exultant youth
Filling their hearts with unaccomplished dreams:
The trumpet-call—then the swift searing darkness
Stilling the proud sad song.

How will these enter in
Our old dull Heaven?
Where we seek only to drowse at ease, unthinking,
Since we are safe at last.

Safe? For these souls who faced a thousand dangers,
And found sly Death that robbed them of their chance,
Ere it befell?
Safe—can a Heaven which is safe and painless,
Ever be Heaven to them?
Somewhere amid the clouds there is the home of thunder;
Thunder is naught to them,
It is a ball, a heavy plaything
They may kick hither and thither with their feet.
Lightning is but a toy—the flaming stars
Are endless camp-fire lights;
And for the silence of eternity,
They too, on out-post duty, often heard it speak.

We have the dreams of our fat lives that lead us
To waste our lives;
We have the false hope we are serving others
When it is but ourselves we serve;
Yet for these who have never lived, and whose sole service
Was but to die too soon,
Perhaps somewhere they are making a new Heaven
Filled with the divine despair and joy this dead earth never knew.

John Gould Fletcher

IV

THE IDEAL OF PEACE

Would you end war?
Create great Peace . . .
James Oppenheim.

THE RED COUNTRY

In the red country
The sky flowers
All day.
Strange mechanical birds
With struts of wire and glazed wings
Cross the impassive sky
Which burgeons ever and again
With ephemeral unfolding flowers,
White and yellow and brown,
That spread and dissolve.
And smaller rapid droning birds go by,
And bright metallic bees whose sting is death.

Behind the hills,
Behind the whispering woods whose leaves are falling
Yellow and red to cover the red clay,
Misshapen monsters squat with wide black maws
Gulping smoke and belching flame.
From the mirk reed beds of the age of coal,
Wallowing out of their sleep in the earlier slime,
They are resurrected and stagger forth to slay—
The prehistoric Beasts we thought were dead.
They are blinded with long sleep,
But men with clever weapons
Goad them to fresh pastures.

Beside still waters
They drink of blood and neigh a horrible laughter,
And their ponderous tread shakes happy cities down,
And the thresh of their flail-like tails
Makes acres smoulder and smoke
Blackened of golden harvest.

The Beasts are back,
And men, in their spreading shadow,
Inhale the odor of their nauseous breath.
Inebriate with it they fashion other gods
Than the gods of day-dream.
Of iron and steel are little images
Made of the Beasts.
And men rush forth and fling themselves for ritual
Before these gods, before the lumbering Beasts—
And some make long obeisance.

Umber and violet flowers of the sky,
The sun, like a blazing Mars, clanks across the blue
And plucks you, to fashion into a nosegay
To offer Venus, his old-time paramour.
But now she shrinks
And pales
Like Cynthia, her more ascetic sister . . .
Vulcan came to her arms in the grimy garb
Of toil, he smelt of the forge and the racketing work-
shop,
But not of blood.
And, if she smells these flowers, they bubble ruby blood
That trickles between her fingers.

Yet is a dream flowing over the red country,
Yet is a light growing, for all the black furrows of the red country . . .
The machines are foe or friend
As the world desires.
The Beasts shall sleep again.
And in that sleep, when the land is twilight-still
And men take thought among the frozen waves of the dead,
The Sowers go forth once more,
Sowers of vision, sowers of the seed
Of peace or war.
Shall it be peace indeed?
Great shadowy figures moving from hill to hill
Of tangled bodies, with rhythmic stride and cowled averted head,
What do you sow with hands funereal—
New savageries imperial,
Unthinking pomps for arrogant, witless men?
Or seed for the people in strong democracy?
What do you see
With your secret eyes, and sow for us, that we must reap again?

William Rose Benét

ABRAHAM LINCOLN WALKS AT MIDNIGHT

(In Springfield, Illinois)

It is portentous, and a thing of state
That here at midnight, in our little town
A mourning figure walks, and will not rest,
Near the old court-house pacing up and down,

Or by his homestead, or in shadowed yards
He lingers where his children used to play,
Or through the market, on the well-worn stones
He stalks until the dawn-stars burn away.

A bronzed, lank man! His suit of ancient black,
A famous high top-hat and plain worn shawl
Make him the quaint great figure that men love,
The prairie-lawyer, master of us all.

He cannot sleep upon his hillside now.
He is among us:—as in times before!
And we who toss and lie awake for long,
Breathe deep, and start, to see him pass the door.

His head is bowed. He thinks of men and kings.
Yea, when the sick world cries, how can he sleep?
Too many peasants fight, they know not why;
Too many homesteads in black terror weep.

The sins of all the war-lords burn his heart.
He sees the dreadnaughts scouring every main.
He carries on his shawl-wrapped shoulders now
The bitterness, the folly, and the pain.

He cannot rest until a spirit-dawn
Shall come;—the shining hope of Europe free:
A league of sober folk, the Workers' Earth,
Bringing long peace to Cornland, Alp, and Sea.

It breaks his heart that things must murder still,
That all his hours of travail here for men
Seem yet in vain. And who will bring white peace
That he may sleep upon his hill again?

Vachel Lindsay

"WHEN THERE IS PEACE"

"When there is Peace our land no more
Will be the land we knew of yore."
Thus do our facile seers foretell
The truth that none can buy or sell
And e'en the wisest must ignore.

When we have bled at every pore,
Shall we still strive for gear and store?
Will it be Heaven? Will it be Hell?
When there is Peace.

This let us pray for, this implore:
That all base dreams thrust out at door,
We may in loftier aims excel
And, like men waking from a spell,
Grow stronger, nobler, than before,
When there is Peace.

Austin Dobson

CLEAN HANDS

MAKE this thing plain to us, O Lord!
That not the triumph of the sword—
Not that alone—can end the strife,
But reformation of the life—
But full submission to Thy Word!

Not all the stream of blood outpoured
Can Peace—the Long-Desired—afford;
Not tears of Mother, Maid, or Wife . . .
Make this thing plain!

We must root out our sins ignored,
By whatsoever name adored;
Our secret sins, that, ever rife,
Shrink from the operating knife;
Then shall we rise, renewed, restored . . .
Make this thing plain!

Austin Dobson

EPILOGUE

Intercession

Now the muttering gun-fire dies,
Now the night has cloaked the slain,
Now the stars patrol the skies,
Hear our sleepless prayer again!
They who work their country's will,
Fight and die for Britain still,
Soldiers, but not haters, know
Thou must pity friend and foe.
Therefore hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

Thou whose wounded hands do reach
Over every land and sea,
Thoughts too deep for human speech
Rise from all our souls to Thee;

Deeper than the wrath that burns
Round our hosts when day returns;
Deeper than the peace that fills
All these trenched and waiting hills.
Hear, O hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

Pity deeper than the grave
Sees, beyond the death we wield,
Faces of the young and brave
Hurled against us in the field.
Cannon-fodder! They *must* come
We must slay them, and be dumb,
Slaughter, while we pity, these
Most implacable enemies.
Master, hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

They are blind, as we are blind,
Urged by duties past reply.
Ours is but the task assigned;
Theirs to strike us ere they die.
Who can see his country fall?
Who but answers at her call?
Who has power to pause and think
When she reels upon the brink?
Hear, O hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

Shield them from that bitterest lie,
Laughed by fools who quote their mirth,
When the wings of death go by,
And their brother shrieks on earth.

Though they clamp their hearts with steel,
Conquering *every* fear they feel,
There are dreams they dare not tell.
Shield, O shield their eyes from hell.
Father, hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

Where the naked bodies burn,
Where the wounded toss at home,
Weep and bleed and laugh in turn,
Yes, the masking jest may come.
Let him jest who daily dies,
But O! hide his haunted eyes.
Pain alone he might control.
Shield, O! shield, his wounded soul.
Master, hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

Peace? We steel us to the end.
Hope betrayed us, long ago.
Duty binds both foe and friend.
It is ours to break the foe.
Then, O God! that we might break
This red Moloch for Thy sake;
Know that Truth indeed prevails,
And that Justice holds the scales.
Father, hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

England, could this awful hour,
Dawning on thy long renown,
Mark the purpose of thy power,
Crowning with that mightier crown!

Broadening to that purpose climb
All the blood-red wars of Time . . .
Set the struggling peoples free!
Crown with Law their Liberty!
England, hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

Speed, O! speed, what every age
Writes with a prophetic hand.
Read the midnight's moving page,
Read the stars and understand:
Out of Chaos ye shall draw
Deepening harmonies of Law
Till around the Eternal Sun
All your peoples move in one.
Christ-God, hear,
Both for foe and friend, our prayer.

Alfred Noyes

UNSER GOTT

THEY held a great prayer-service in Berlin,
And augured German triumph from some words
Said to be spoken by the Jewish God
To Gideon, which signified that He
Was staunchly partial to the Israelites.
The aisles were thronged; and in the royal box
(I had it from a tourist who was there,
Clutching her passport, anxious, like the rest),
There sat the Kaiser, looking " very sad."
And then they sang; she said it shook the heart.

The women sobbed; tears salted bearded lips
Unheeded; and my friend looked back and saw
A young girl crumple in her mother's arms.
They carried out a score of them, she said,
While German hearts, through bursting German throats
Poured out, *Ein Feste Burg Ist Unser Gott!*

(Yea, "Unser Gott! Our strength is *Unser Gott!*
Not that light-minded Bon Dieu of France!")

I think we all have made our God too small.
There was a young man, a good while ago,
Who taught that doctrine . . . but they murdered him
Because he wished to share the Jewish God
With other folk.
They are long-lived, these fierce
Old hating Gods of nations; but at last
There surely will be spilled enough of blood
To drown them all! The deeps of sea and air,
Of old the seat of gods, no more are safe,
For mines and monoplanes. The Germans, now,
Can surely find and rout the God of France
With Zeppelins, or some slim mother's son
Of Paris, or of Tours, or Brittany,
Can drop a bomb into the *Feste Burg*,
And, having crushed the source of German strength,
Die happy in his blazing monoplane.

Sad jesting! If there be no God at all,
Save in the heart of man, why, even so—

Yea, all the more—since we must make our God,
Oh, let us make Him large enough for all,
Or cease to prate of Him! If kings must fight,
Let them fight for their glory, openly,
And plain men for their lands and for their homes,
And heady youths, who go to see the fun,
Blaspheme not God. True, maybe we might leave
The God of Germany to some poor frau
Who cannot go, who can but wait and mourn,
Except that she will teach Him to her sons—
A God quite scornful of the Slavic soul,
And much concerned to keep Alsace-Lorraine.
They should go godless, too—the poor, benumbed
Crushed, anguished women, till their hearts can hold
A greater Comforter!

(Yet it is hard
To make Him big enough! For me, I like
The English and the Germans and the French,
The Russians, too; and Servians, I should think,
Might well be very interesting to God.
But, do the best I may, my God is white,
And hardly takes a nigger seriously
This side of Africa. Not those, at least,
Who steal my wood, and of a summer night
Keep me awake with shouting, where they sit
With monkey-like fidelity and glee
Grinding through their well-oiled sausage-mill—
The dead machinery of the white man's church—
Raw jungle-fervor, mixed with scraps sucked dry
Of Israel's old sublimities: not those.

And when they threaten us, the Higher Race,
Think you, which side is God's? Oh, let us pray
Lest blood yet spurt to wash that black skin white,
As now it flows because a German hates
A Cossack, and an Austrian a Serb!)

What was it that he said so long ago,
The young man who outgrew the Jewish God—
"Not a sparrow falleth—?" Ah, God, God,
And there shall fall a million murdered men!

Karle Wilson Baker

DAYBREAK

Four years of night and nightmare; years of black
Hate and its murderous attack.
Four years of midnight terrors till the brain,
Beaten in the intolerable campaign,
Saw nothing but a world of driven men
And skies that never could be clean again.
Hot winds that tore the lungs, great gusts
Of rotting madness and forgotten lusts.
Hills draped with death; the beat of terrible wings;
Flowers that smelt of carrion; monstrous things
That crawled on iron bellies over trees
And swarmed in blood . . . till even the seas
Were one wet putrefaction, and the earth
A violated grave of trampled mirth.
What light there was, was only there to show
Intolerance delivering blow on blow,
Bigotry rampant, honor overborn,
And faith derided with a blast of scorn

This was our daily darkness; we had thought
All freedom worthless and all beauty naught.
The eager, morning-hearted days were gone
When we took joy in small things: In the sun
Tracing a delicate pattern through thick leaves
With its long yellow pencils. Or blue eaves
Frosted with moonlight, and one ruddy star
Ringing against the night, a chime
Like an insistent single rhyme.
Or see the full-blown moon stuck on a spar,
A puff-ball flower on a rigid stalk.
Or think of nothing better than to walk
With one small boy and listen to the war
Of waters pulling at a stubborn shore,
And laugh to see the waves run out of bounds
Like boisterous and shaggy hounds.
Watching the stealthy rollers come alive,
And shake their silver manes and leap and dive.
Or listen with him to the voiceless talk
Of fireflies and daisies; feel the late
Dusk full of unheard music, or vibrate
To a more actual magic; hear the notes
Of birds with sunset shaking on their throats.
Or watch the emerald and olive trees
Turn purple ghosts in dusty distances . . .
The city's kindling energy; the sweet
Pastoral of an empty street.
Football and friends; lyrics and daffodils.
The sovereign splendor of the marching hills—
These were all ours to choose from and enjoy

Until this vast disease came to destroy
The casual beneficence of life.

But now a thin edge, like a merciful knife,
Pierces the shadows, and a chiselling ray
Cuts the thick folds away.
Murmurs of morning; glad, awakening cries;
Hints of majestic rhythms rise.
Dawn will not be denied. The blackness shakes;
And here a brand and there a beacon breaks
Into the challenge that may soon be hurled
With a new fire for a burned-out world.
A world of wide experiments, of fair
Disputes, desires and tolerance everywhere,
With laughter loose again and time enough
To feel the warm-lipped and cool-fingered love
With kindly passion lifted from the dead;
Where daylight shall be bountifully spread
And darkness but a wide and welcome bed.

Louis Untermeyer

A SOLDIER'S TESTAMENT

If I come to die
In this inhuman strife,
I grudge it not, if I
By laying down my life
Do aught at all to bring
A day of charity,
When pride of lord or king
Un-powerful shall be
To spend the nations' store,

To spill the peoples' blood;
Whereafter evermore
Humanity's full flood
Untroubled on shall roll
In a rich tide of peace,
And the world's wondrous soul
Uncrucified increase.

But if my life be given
Merely that lords and kings
May say, "We well have striven!
See! where our banner flings
Its folds upon the breeze
(Thanks, noble sirs, to you!).
See how the lands and seas
Have changed their pristine hue . . ."
If after I am dead
On goes the same old game,
With monarchs seeing red
And ministers aflame,
And nations drowning deep
In quarrels not their own,
And peoples called to reap
The woes they have not sown; . . .
If all we who are slain
Have died, despite our hope,
Only to twist again
The old kaleidoscope—
Why then, by God! we're sold!
Cheated and wronged! betrayed!
Our youth and lives and gold

Wasted—the homes we'd made
  Shattered—in folly blind,
By treachery and spite,
  By cowardice of mind
And little men and light! . . .
  If there be none to build
Out of this ruined world
  The temple we have willed
With our flag there unfurled,
  If rainbow none there shine
Across these skies of woe,
  If seed of yours and mine
Through this same hell must go,
  Then may my soul and those
Of all who died in vain
  (Be they of friends or foes)
Rise and come back again
  From peace that knows no end
From faith that knows not doubt,
  To haunt and sear and rend
The men that sent us out.

Eliot Crawshay Williams

Bir El Mazar, Egypt.

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW [1]

God, I am travelling out to death's sea,
  I, who exulted in sunshine and laughter,
Thought not of dying—death is such waste of me!
  Grant me one comfort: Leave not the hereafter

[1] From *A Sheaf*, by John Galsworthy; copyright, 1916, by Charles Scribner's Sons. By permission of the publishers.

Of mankind to war, as though I had died not—
I, who in battle, my comrade's arm linking,
Shouted and sang—life in my pulses hot
Throbbing and dancing! Let not my sinking
In dark be for naught, my death a vain thing!
God, let me know it the end of man's fever!
Make my last breath a bugle call, carrying
Peace o'er the valleys and cold hills, for ever!

John Galsworthy

PAX VENTURA

Our peace was but a honey-comb
Whereon we fed like glutted bees:
Not knowing that the Peace to come
Must be as dangerous as the seas.

A sword—a magnitude—a flame,
A holy passion brave and high;
Not for this peace that was our shame
Do ye, Oh our redeemers, die!

Gather us up out of our sleep,
And pray that we may be forgiven,
Who followed life like frightened sheep,
Who lived in Hell and spoke of Heaven.

Margaret Sackville

TO ONE WHO DENIES THE POSSIBILITY OF A PERMANENT PEACE

Old friend, I greet you! you are still the same:
You poisoned Socrates, you crucified
Christ, you have persecuted, mocked, denied,
Rejected God and cursed Him in God's name.
You gave monotonously to the flame
All those (whom now you honor) when the new
Truth stung their lips—for fear it might be true;
Then reaped where they had sown and felt no shame.

Familiar voice, old adversary—hail!
Yesterday's fools are now your gods. Behold!
The generations pass and we can wait.
You slandered Darwin, Florence Nightingale;
Now a new splendour quivers in the cold
Grey shadows overhead; *still* you are late.

Margaret Sackville

THE DEAD MEN'S WATCH

(*Over the Peace Conference in Paris*)

In the white and delicate city, where pleasure mates with art,
There are ghosts walking, and they are sick at heart.

And there are those walking that drowned in the deep seas,
With the sands in their thick hair and the weeds about their knees.

And there are those walking that never will be found
By the bird in the air or the worm under the ground.

Thunder clamored and flame flew, and where God's creature went
There rose but a little smoke from the grey earth foully rent.

And they that are not, in their thin and piteous hosts
Walk the streets by daylight, the grey, unheeded ghosts.

And fear is in their faces and horror in their eyes—
For he that dies in vain, a double death he dies.

And they whisper one to another, and they murmur their dull pleas:
"What if the peace of the old men shall be a toothed peace?

"What if the peace of the old men be made with tooth and claw,
By the strong according to his strength, as in the crimson law?

"Brother, we gave our only life the crimson law to kill,
And spilled the iron chalice out upon the tortured hill.

"Go, sink upon his shoulder, and whisper at his ear,
And knock at the heart of each old man, that he may wake and hear:

"And glide into his secret sleep and dog his feet by day,
For we have died to make the peace the old men live to slay.

"Scavenger birds have watched for us upon the desert plains,
Our bones are bleached in endless snows and washed with mountain rains.

"And we have laid ourselves to sleep in lands we never knew,
Where strangers' feet went over us and red siroccos blew.

"But we said to one another, deep in our dreaming hearts:
We died to make an end that men may barter death in marts;

"That never again a rich man batten upon his scarlet gold—
Nor the cold silks of his women run blood from every fold.

"Our sons ploughing the broken fields where we have moaned and lain,
Shall never hear the rattling drum summoning up the slain—

"Summoning up the living men with the seal upon their brows,
And Death behind the trumpeter, beckoning from his house.

"Choked with high words and wrapped in hate and
weaponed with a lie,
So we went forth in all the years, helpless to live or die.

"But now they make a peace for us, that the world may
have rest,
And the sun storming up the east and shattering down
the west

"Shall rise upon a newer world that has forgot to kill:—
For this we fought and died, my brother—who remem-
bers still?

"But now the old men make the peace; busy, with
crafty eyes,
They carry stones for the temple and build in cunning
wise:

"And fear is in our hollow eyes, and fear eats at the
heart,
And plucks us out of our cool graves and thrusts us in
the mart.

"And we must walk the city streets and watch, early
and late,
Lest that the peace the old men make should be a peace
of hate."

Ethel Talbot Scheffauer

VICTORY—WITHOUT PEACE

THE slaughter-bugles screamed once more,
Over the patchwork lands of men,
And scattered, sword-hewn empires tore
Each other's greedy hearts again—

One with a black and boastful greed,
Seeking a red supremacy;
The other with a mumbled creed
That it was armed to make men free.

Each steppe and pampa woke to flame
And joined the berserker advance;
From wild forgotten roads they came,
For the world's roads all led to France.

And now no more the hail of steel
Tortures the lines of brown and gray . . .
The brief, joy-mad processions reel
And drop . . . and it is peace, men say.

Peace? When wherever men are found
The victors cry, " But just so free! "
And reddened banners spring from the ground,
For freer red supremacy. . . .

A hollow shell of victory,
With war still writhing at its heart;
A clipped and gelded liberty,
Striving to force its chain apart!

Yet solvent love is not too far,
If men grow wise, or mobs stay kind;
And we could calm this troubled star,
Its singing rapture unconfined.

Now take your choice, O you who hoard
Frail-fingered power, weak lordly breath;
Young freedom, or the age-scarred sword,
Which leaves no peace on earth—but death.

Clement Wood

1914—AND AFTER

Would you end war?
Create great Peace . . .
. . . . . .
But that which we call Peace?
This monstrous machine that weakens millions in factories,
This lust of money for its own sake: to swell one's social stomach larger than one's neighbor's . . .
This poor little personal strife and family pride,
This softness of muscle and cowardice of spirit . . .
Is this Peace?
Is merely keeping alive, Peace?
Better the young die greatly than live weakly . . .

Would you end war?
Create great Peace . . .
The Peace that demands all of a man,
His love, his life, his veriest self;
Plunge him in the smelting fires of a work that becomes his child,

Coerce him to be himself at all hazards: with the toil
and the mating that belong to him:
Compel him to serve . . .
Give him a hard Peace: a Peace of discipline and justice . . .
Kindle him with vision, invite him to joy and adventure:
Set him to work, not to create *things*
But to create *men:*
Yea, himself.

Go search your heart, America . . .
Turn from the machine to man,
Build, while there is yet time, a creative Peace . . .
While there is yet time! . . .
For if you reject great Peace,
As surely as vile living brings disease,
So surely shall your selfishness bring war.

James Oppenheim

AFTERMATH [1]

Have you forgotten yet?
For the world's events have rumbled on since those
gagged days,
Like traffic checked awhile at the crossing of city ways:
And the haunted gap in your mind has filled with
thoughts that flow
Like clouds in the lit heavens of life; and you're a man
reprieved to go,

[1] Taken by permission from *Picture-Show,* by Siegfried Sassoon, copyrighted by E. P. Dutton and Company, New York.

Taking your peaceful share of Time, with joy to spare.
But the past is just the same—and War's a bloody game . . .
Have you forgotten yet? . . .
Look down, and swear by the slain of the War that you'll never forget.

Do you remember the dark months you held the sector at Mametz—
The nights you watched and wired and dug and piled sandbags on parapets?
Do you remember the rats; and the stench
Of corpses rotting in front of the front-line trench—
And dawn coming, dirty-white, and chill with a hopeless rain?
Do you ever stop and ask, "Is it all going to happen again?"

Do you remember that hour of din before the attack—
And the anger, the blind compassion that seized and shook you then
As you peered at the doomed and haggard faces of your men?
Do you remember the stretcher-cases lurching back
With dying eyes and lolling heads—those ashen-grey
Masks of the lads who once were keen and kind and gay?

Have you forgotten yet? . . .
Look up, and swear by the green of the spring that you'll never forget.

Siegfried Sassoon

March, 1919

NOTES ON AUTHORS AND POEMS

P. 1: The poem from which this quotation is taken is included in Emile Cammaerts' *New Belgian Poems.*

P. 3: *The Avenue of the Allies* was the name given to Fifth Avenue, New York City, as it was decorated with the flags of the Allied nations during one of the loan drives. Mr. Noyes says that, as he once came into the empty street at midnight, the west wind tossing the flags reminded him of Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind,* and so was the original suggestion of this poem. See note on p. 126 (p. 156).

P. 6: *Rupert Brooke* is generally regarded as one of the most brilliant of the young men who died early in the war. He had been ill and had traveled across North America and through the South Seas to regain his health. But at the outbreak of the war he volunteered as ensign in the Naval Reserve of England. He died on the Island of Skyros in the Ægean Sea, on his way to Gallipoli, on April 23, 1915. His sonnets on the war, of which two are reprinted here—*The Soldier* and *the Dead* (pp. 6 and 101)—represent the finest expression of his poetic genius; the entire series, as well as such earlier verses as "The Great Lover," should be read in the *Collected Poems of Rupert Brooke* (1915).

P. 7: *Helen Gray Cone* has published war verses in *A Chant of Love for England and Other Poems.* She is head of the Department of English at Hunter College, New York City.

P. 8: *Belgium the Bar-Lass* is in this poem compared to Catherine Douglass, a heroine of Scottish legend. The story goes that she thrust her arm through the staples in the huge monastery door, from which the enemies of the King, James I, had removed the bar, and let them break her arm so as to give the king time to escape. Catherine's courage was unavailing; the king was captured and slain. His eventful history is told in Jusserand's *The Romance of a King's Life* and in Rosetti's *King's Tragedy.*

A. Mary F. Robinson (Madame Duclaux) has written

biographies of Ernest Renan and of Victor Hugo, and a book of criticism, *Twentieth Century French Writers,* completed in August, 1914, but only recently published.

P. 9: *Edith Wharton,* one of our most distinguished American writers, served during the war in French hospitals and is a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor.

P. 10: *Serbia to the Hohenzollerns:* Serbia has been the battleground of eastern Europe, as have Flanders and northern France in the west. Particularly in the centuries after the Turks captured Constantinople it was harried by their vigorous efforts to conquer the whole of Europe.

Cecil Chesterton, well known as a contributor to British journals, served as private in a Highland regiment in France. He is a nephew of G. K. Chesterton.

P. 11. *George Edward Woodberry* is author of a number of poems of the war, published in various journals and in *The Roamer and Other Poems* (1919).
Viva Italia means "Hail to Italy"; *Ecco,* "Behold!"

Major Charles Buxton Going is author of two volumes of verse, *Summer Fallow* (Putnams, 1892), and *Star Glow and Song* (Harpers, 1909); of juvenile verse, in collaboration with Marie Overton Corbin, now Mrs. Going, in the volumes *Urchins of the Sea* (Longmans, 1901), and *Urchins at the Pole* (Stokes, 1902), and of other books, technical articles, and short stories.

P. 12: *Vive la France* means something like "Hail to France!" or "Live, O France!" Its significance can be best understood from the poem itself. A *sauterelle* is a grasshopper. This is one of the most beautiful of modern ballads.
Charlotte Holmes Crawford is an American writer of verses.

P. 14: *Theodosia Garrison* (Mrs. Frederick J. Faulks) has published *The Joy o' Life and other Poems* (1909), *Earth Cry and other Poems,* and *The Dreamers* (1917).

P. 17: *James Oppenheim* is an American poet. His free-verse meters often suggest the sweep and power of the poetry of the *Psalms* in our King James translation of the Bible. See note on *1914—and After,* p. 143 (p. 156).

P. 18: *W. N. Ewer* is editor of the *Daily Herald* (London), and has written war poetry published in *Five*

Souls, and Other War-Time Verses (*The Herald*, London, 1916).

P. 23: This quatrain is from Thomas Hardy's *The Dynasts*, a "massive and most amazing" drama of the Napoleonic Wars, which foreshadows many of the pictures of the Great War that poets have shown, and the conclusions they have reached. Mr. Hardy, now over eighty years old, is a foremost writer of English novels.

P. 25: *Winifred Letts* served as a nurse during the War. She has published verses in the *Yale Review* and other journals, and in a volume *Hallowe'en, and Poems of the War*.

Connaught is one of the four ancient kingdoms of Ireland; the *Liffey* river flows through Dublin.

P. 27: *Mrs. Karle Wilson Baker* is the author of *Blue Smoke*, made up of verses which appeared originally in *Poetry*, the *Yale Review*, and other magazines. Her home is in Nacogdoches, Texas.

P. 28: *Lieutenant Edward Wyndham Tennant* enlisted as a schoolboy of seventeen, at the beginning of the war, and was killed in the battle of the Somme in 1916. Lady Glenconner has published a memorial of her son (John Lane, 1919).

P. 31: *Francis Ledwidge*, son of Irish peasants and himself a laborer, was Lance-Corporal in Lord Dunsany's regiment in France and in the East. He was killed in July, 1917. Lord Dunsany has edited and introduced his *Songs of the Fields, Songs of Peace*, and *Last Songs*.

P. 33: *Leur gaieté fait peur* (a quotation from the heroine of W. J. Locke's *The Rough Road*): Their gaiety makes one afraid.

P. 35: *Wilfrid Wilson Gibson*, author of sharp characterizations of British soldiers and of trench life in *Hill Tracks* and *Battle and Other Verses*, served as a private in the British army in France.

P. 36: *The Twa Weelums* (The Two Williams) is written in the Scotch dialect, which uses broad *a*'s where we use *o*'s and *air* for our *er; gin* means if; *ilka*, every; *speir*, look; *fegs-aye*, yes indeed; *ae*, one; *fechter*, fighter; *besoms* (brooms) a disrespectful word for girls. It is not very difficult to make out Sergeant Henderson's plan for ending the war at once. His boasting reminds one of the huge Highlander James Dowie, in Barrie's play *The Old Lady Shows Her Medals;* when asked how he had captured seven Ger-

mans, as he boasted he had done, he said, "In the usual way—surrounded them and cut them off!"

P. 37: *Frank Sidgwick* is a member of the publishing firm of Sidgwick and Jackson, London.

P. 39: *Sir Henry Newbolt* is author of several volumes of poems and stories of the sea and of varied adventure, including *Drake's Drum, The Book of the Thin Red Line,* and *Poems New and Old, or St. George's Day.*

P. 40: *Cicely Fox Smith* has published war verse in the volumes *Fighting Men* and *The Naval Crown;* some of her poems have to do with the staunch service of the British Merchant Marine, as do Mr. Noyes' "Old Captain Stormalong," "Kilmeny," and "The Big Black Trawler" (of the sea-captain, ninety years old, who kept warm in Arctic weather by soaking his sea-boots and dungarees "in the good salt water that the good Lord don't let freeze").

P. 42: *Captain James Norman Hall,* an American, volunteered at the outbreak of the war in the British army, which he described in *Kitchener's Mob,* and afterward in the French Aviation Corps, where he wrote *High Adventure.* He was wounded and taken prisoner in 1917, and held in Germany until the armistice.

P. 46: *Sir Owen Seaman,* for many years the editor of London *Punch,* has published verses in *War Time* and *Made in England.*

P. 47: *Richard Aldington* served as No. 24965, Eleventh Devons, with the British Expeditionary Forces in France; his war poems, some of them of extraordinary beauty and power, are printed in *War and Love.*

The *Faun* of this poem is of course the goat-footed Roman deity.

P. 48: *Captain Robert Graves* served with the Royal Welsh Fusileers; his *Fairies and Fusileers* contains verses both of whimsical lightness and of grim power.

P. 53: *London Joe* of course talks Cockney English, with liberal displacement of *H* and *R*, *s'y* for say, *w'y* for way, *blime* for blame, and *'arf* for half. A *quid* or *sovereign* is worth about five dollars

P. 56: *"Damon"* (Miss G. M. Faulding) was connected with the British Y. M. C. A. war service in France.

P. 57: *Lieutenant Joseph Lee,* at first a private in the British army in France, was taken prisoner in November, 1917. He has published *Ballads of Battle* and *Work-a-Day Warriors,* illustrated by his own drawings.

P. 58: *Captain Charles Hamilton Sorley* was killed in the battle of Loos on October 13, 1915, at the age of twenty. His verse, of beautiful promise, is published in the volume *Marlborough and other Poems.* His fine and broad tolerance is shown in his sonnet *To Germany* and in this extract from a letter home written during his army training: "I think that Germany, in spite of her vast bigotry and blindness, is in a kind of way living up to the motto that Goethe left her in the closing words of *Faust* before he died." He translated the quatrain from *Faust* (Part II, lines 6944-7) to which he refers:

Ay, in this thought is my whole life's persistence,
This is the whole conclusion of the true:
He only owns his Freedom, owns existence,
Who every day must conquer them anew.

P. 58: E. H. Visiak has published war verses in the volume *The Battle Fields* (Elkin Matthews, London, 1916).

Pp. 62-63: *Captain Siegfried Sassoon,* graduate of Christ Church, Oxford, and wearer of the Military Cross, is author of poems published in *Counter-Attack* and *Picture Show,* which picture the war as it appeared to common soldiers in trench and shell-hole, in France and Palestine. At one time Captain Sassoon, after being wounded, gassed, and shell-shocked, protested against continuing in the war, and in order to get him out of the way the British military authorities committed him to a hospital for the treatment of shell-shock. The sights he saw there were almost as terrible as those at the front; and the thought of his men bearing the brunt in France compelled him to ask return to service to endure with them. He refers to this experience in the poem "Banishment," in *Counter-Attack.*

P. 64: *William Ellery Leonard* is associate professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, and is author of *The Vaunt of Man and Other Poems, The Lynching Bee and Other Poems* (from which "The Pied Piper" is taken), and of other verse, studies, and translations. Many of his verses in *The Lynching Bee* deal in forthright and courageous fashion with the results of war-hysteria in this country.

Shell-Shock: It adds, not to the literary interest, but to the historical and reflective value of these verses to know that they record an actual incident of post-war rehabilitation, as told by an army physician.

P. 65: *Lady Margaret Sackville's* war poems have been published in *The Pageant of War* (1916), and *Selected Poems* (1919).
Quo Vaditis?—Where are you going?

Captain Gilbert Frankau was engaged actively in the British artillery service until retired for invalidity in 1918. His war poems are published in *The Judgment of Valhalla, One of Them, A Song of the Guns,* and *The Other Side and Other Verses,* from the last of which the two poems here reprinted are taken.

P. 68: *May Sinclair* is a distinguished British writer, author of *The Divine Fire* and other novels.
Via dolorosa, via sacra (dolorous way, sacred way) is a name usually given to Christ's route to Golgotha, the place of crucifixion.

P. 70: *Captain William G. Shakespeare* served during the war as a medical officer in the British army; his war verse is published in *Ypres and Other Poems.*

P. 74: *Misericordia* means pity: the word has other interesting meanings. Evidently the old toy-maker thinks he is in part responsible for bringing about war. How does he feel about this? A *pietà* is an image of Christ's dead body carried in his mother's arms.
Amy Lowell's recent poetry has appeared in the volumes *Men, Women, and Ghosts, Sword Blades and Poppy Seeds,* and *Pictures of the Floating World.*

P. 75: *Dana Burnet* was a war correspondent in France for the New York *Evening Sun.*

P. 76: *A. E.* is the pen name of George William Russell, an Irish writer and nationalist leader of great and individual power. His collected poems were published by the Macmillan Company (1912-17), and *Gods of War and Other Poems* was privately printed in Dublin, 1916.

P. 82: *Captain Julian Grenfell,* oldest son of Lord Desborough, died of wounds in France May 26, 1915; *Into Battle* appeared in the *Times* (London) of May 28. He had received the Distinguished Service Order.

P. 84: *Lieutenant Robert Nichols* served in the British army during the war until discharged for invalidity in 1916. His war poems are published in the volume *Ardours and Endurances;* he has also introduced Captain Sassoon's *Counter-Attack.*

P. 85: *F. W. Harvey,* as Lance-Corporal in the Fifth Gloucesters, gained the Distinguished Conduct Medal in August, 1915. He was later trained as an officer.

His first volume of poems, *A Gloucestershire Lad,* was published at a time when its author was reported missing. Afterward word was received that he was prisoner of war in Germany, and his volume *Gloucestershire Friends* was sent home from there by special permission. *Comrades in Captivity,* a lively account of his experiences in seven German prisons, and *Ducks and Other Verses* have been published since his return to England.

P. 86: *The Last Post,* or Taps, is the bugle call for lights out, and is played over the graves of soldiers. In *Rouge Bouquet* (p. 102) Joyce Kilmer imitates the rhythm of the bugle notes in this call.

Lieutenant P. H. B. Lyon, awarded the British Military Cross, has published war poems both serious and pleasantly whimsical in *Poems of Youth and War. Morituri Te Salutant:* "Those about to die salute thee."

P. 88: *Robert Ernest Vernède,* though of middle age at the opening of the war, enlisted at once and served as second lieutenant till his death in April, 1917. His poems have been published with an appreciative introduction by his friend Edmund Gosse.

Wilfred Owen, a captain in the Manchester Regiment, was killed at the age of twenty-five, only a week before the armistice. He had been invalided home in 1917, but he "came out again," as he wrote to his mother a month before his death, "in order to help these boys; directly, by leading them as well as an officer can; indirectly, by watching their sufferings, that I may speak of them as well as a pleader can." In an unfinished Preface to his poems, found among his papers, he had written:

Above all, this book is not concerned with Poetry.
The subject of it is War, and the pity of War.
The Poetry is in the pity.

The terrible pity of the poems here included, and of such great verses as An Anthem for Doomed Youth, Greater Love, Apologia pro Poemate Meo, Mental Cases, The Dead-Beat, The Sentry, and A Terre goes far to justify the opinion of critics who have claimed for Wilfred Owen's small volume the distinction of including some of the greatest poetry of the war. The book is introduced by Siegfried Sassoon.

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori may be translated "Sweet and lovely it is to die for one's country."

P. 90: *Alan Seeger,* a young American poet, fought from the beginning of the war in the French Foreign Legion, and died of wounds July 5, 1916. His *Collected Poems* and *Letters and Diary* have since been published.

P. 91: *Lieutenant-Colonel John McRae* was a Canadian physician who served notably at the front and in the war hospitals until his death in January, 1918. *In Flanders Fields,* first published in London *Punch,* is the title poem of a volume of his verse since issued in the United States and in Great Britain.

This poem is a *rondeau;* the form, further illustrated in this collection by the two poems by Austin Dobson, has a distinct scheme of long and short lines and of rhyme. Few of the many imitators of the poem took the trouble to master its form. Many delightful rondeaus and other French forms in English verse are contained in Gleason White's *Ballades and Rondeaus.*

P. 91: The *Very-light* was a star-shell which illuminated brilliantly the space between the trenches, to prevent night-attacks.

P. 100: *The Going* is Mr. Gibson's word of farewell to his friend Rupert Brooke.

P. 102: *Joyce Kilmer,* American poet and soldier, was killed in France, at the age of 32, in July, 1918. His war poems appeared in *Main Street and other Poems* and in his *Poems, Essays, and Letters.* His best known and most beautiful poem is *Trees.* See the note on Captain Graves' *The Last Post,* p. 86 (p. 153). *Rouge Bouquet* means literally Red Bouquet.

P. 105: *Lieutenant Herbert Asquith,* son of former premier Asquith, served in the British army in France; his verse appeared in *The Volunteer and Other Poems*

P. 106: *Louis Untermeyer* has published several volumes of verse: *The Younger Quire* (1910), *First Love* (1911), *Challenge* (1914 and 1915), — *and Other Poets*—parodies of various writers (1916), and *Including Horace*—further parodies (1919); *These Times* (1917), and *The New Adam* (1920), "a more or less integrated series of lyrics;" and contributions to the *Miscellany of American Poetry* (1920), to which Amy Lowell, Robert Frost, John Gould Fletcher, James Oppenheim, Vachel Lindsay, and

Jean Starr Untermeyer have also contributed. Mr. Untermeyer has edited *Modern American Poetry* and *Modern British Poetry,* selective and critical anthologies published in 1920, and a volume of translations of Heine.

P. 107: *Laurence Binyon's* war verse is published in *The Winnowing Fan, The Cause, The New World,* and *For the Fallen and Other Poems.*

P. 108: *Edward Verrall Lucas* has published since 1899 many volumes of poems, familiar essays, and stories, and edited the *Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb.*

P. 110: *Edith Cavell,* a British Red Cross Nurse in Belgium, was executed by the German military authorities on a charge of helping Belgian soldiers to escape. A statue to her memory has been erected in Brussels.

P. 111: *Robert Frost,* at various times a farmer and a college professor, has been recently appointed a Fellow in English at the University of Michigan. He has published several volumes of distinguished verse, including *A Boy's Will, North of Boston,* and *Mountain Interval.*

P. 112: *Jean Starr Untermeyer,* wife of Louis Untermeyer, has published war poems and other verses in the volume *Growing Pains* (1919).

P. 113: *Sara Teasdale* (Mrs. Edward Filsinger) has published many charming lyrics in *Rivers to the Sea* (1915) and other volumes, and in various periodicals.

P. 116: *F. W. Bourdillon* has published, besides several volumes of his own verses, from 1878 to 1892, editions and translations of *Aucassin and Nicolette,* the *Roman de la Rose,* and other romances.

P. 117: *John Gould Fletcher* has published numerous volumes of poems: *Fire and Wine* (1913), *Irradiations* (1915), *Goblins and Pagodas* (1916), *The Tree of Life* (1918), and *Japanese Prints* (1918); he has contributed to *Some Imagist Poets* and *New Paths,* and to the *Yale Review,* from which *A New Heaven* is taken, and other magazines.

P. 121: *William Rose Benét* has published several volumes containing strong and individual poems: *Merchants from Cathay* (1913), *The Falconer of God* (1914), *The Great White Wall* (1916), and *The Burglar of the Zodiac* (1918).

P. 123: *Vachel Lindsay,* well known as an American poet of distinctive force, has published among other volumes of poems *The Congo, The Chinese Nightingale,* and *The Golden Whales of California.*

P. 125: Among *Austin Dobson's* volumes of poetry are *Proverbs in Porcelain* (1877), *At the Sign of the Lyre* (1885), *Old-World Idylls* (1883); his *Collected Poems* were first issued in 1897, the ninth edition in 1913. *A Bookman's Budget* (1917) contains both prose and verse.
See note on the *rondeau*, p. 91 (p. 154).

P. 126: *Alfred Noyes*, English poet, has been at various times a member of the Department of English of Princeton University. His war poems, including several ballads of the trawling fleet that served as mine sweepers in the North Sea (see note on p. 40 (p. 150)), are published in *A Belgian Christmas Eve, The Lord of Misrule*, and *The New Morning*, and in the third volume of his *Collected Poems*. In "A Victory Dance" Mr. Noyes presents sharply the selfishness of those who betrayed the ideals of the war and, immediately after the Armistice, have quite forgotten its sacrifices.

P. 129: *Unser Gott:* Our God (German); *bon dieu*, the good God (French).
See note on p. 27 (p. 149).

P. 134: *Lieutenant-Colonel Eliot Crawshay-Williams* has published in England three volumes of verse, all containing war poems: *Songs on Service* (Blackwell), *The Gutter and the Stars* (Erskine Macdonald), and *Clouds and the Sun* (George Allen and Unwin).

P. 136: *John Galsworthy*, author of most significant novels and essays, and the foremost writer of contemporary drama in English, served during the War as a masseur in the hospitals. His war writings are in part included in *A Sheaf* and *Another Sheaf*—many of the papers urging with strong, quiet emphasis the duty of peace-reconstruction.

P. 137: *Pax Ventura:* the coming peace.

P. 138: *Ethel Talbot Scheffauer*, an Englishwoman, contributed "The Dead Men's Watch" to the *New Age* (London), in 1919.

P. 142: *Clement Wood* has quite recently written a beautiful poem, "Canopus," which has attracted especial interest because of its development of a type of seven-line stanza with apparently considerable possibilities for use in narrative verse. The poem was published in the Summer Book Supplement to the New York *Nation*, June 22, 1921.

P. 143: "*1914—and After*" and other poems in Mr. Oppenheim's two volumes *War and Laughter* and *The*

Solitary—especially the verses "Shadow" and "The Sea"—should be read entire for a clear understanding of the writer's significant attitude toward war and peace.

P. 144: See the note on pp. 62-3 (p. 151).

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